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THE PUBLIC  
CHILD-WELFARE PROGRAM  
IN THE  
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

BUREAU PUBLICATION No. 240

(Revised and enlarged edition)

CHILDREN'S BUREAU  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

1938



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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

FRANCES PERKINS, Secretary

CHILDREN'S BUREAU . . . KATHARINE F. LENROOT, Chief

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THE PUBLIC CHILD-WELFARE  
PROGRAM IN THE DISTRICT  
OF COLUMBIA

BY

EMMA O. LUNDBERG



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United States  
Government Printing Office  
Washington : 1938

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JUN 3 1938



# CONTENTS

	Page
Letter of transmittal.....	v
Progress toward adequate care and protection.....	1
Changes of the past 20 years.....	1
Scope and purpose of the present study.....	2
Conclusions and recommendations.....	4
Archaic laws and inadequate funds handicap child welfare.....	4
Public care for dependent children should be available without court commitment.....	5
Removal of children from their homes should be determined by investigation and case work.....	6
Types of care should be available to meet individual needs.....	7
Special attention is needed for the colored child.....	8
Broken homes create child-welfare problems.....	10
The rate of child dependency in the District is abnormally high.....	11
Child dependency, neglect, and delinquency can be prevented.....	12
Next steps in developing a child-welfare program.....	15
Legal background of child care and protection in the District of Columbia.....	19
Origin and jurisdiction of the public child-welfare agency.....	19
Institutions under the Board of Public Welfare.....	21
Home care of dependent children.....	23
Organization and staff of the Child-Welfare Division.....	24
Responsibilities and personnel.....	24
Investigation and temporary-care department.....	25
Permanent-care department.....	26
Home-finding department.....	27
Department of medical care and supervision.....	27
Outstanding needs of the Child-Welfare Division.....	27
Intake and adjustment work of the Child-Welfare Division.....	31
Court commitment of dependent and neglected children.....	31
Investigation and intake work of the Child-Welfare Division.....	33
Method of handling complaints of dependency and neglect.....	33
Advice and referral.....	33
Field service.....	34
Investigation for admission to the District Training School.....	35
Dependent and neglected children before the juvenile court.....	36
Sources of petitions.....	36
Types of commitment.....	36
Rehearing of temporary commitments.....	37
Delinquent children committed to the Board of Public Welfare.....	39
Dependent and delinquent wards of the Board of Public Welfare.....	42
Number of children and care provided.....	42
Wards of the Board of Public Welfare.....	43
Sex, race, and reason for commitment.....	43
Temporary and permanent commitments.....	44
Types of care.....	45
Maintenance from public funds.....	48
Public aid to dependent children in their own homes.....	49
Prevention of child dependency through home care.....	49
Aid under the Home-Care Act of the District of Columbia.....	50
Families aided and annual expenditures.....	50
Average grants.....	51
Children aided.....	52
Families on relief rolls eligible for aid to dependent children.....	52
Aid to dependent children under the Social Security Act.....	53

	Page
Delinquent children before the juvenile court.....	56
Purpose and scope of study.....	56
Official and unofficial cases.....	56
Ages of the children.....	57
Offenses charged against boys.....	58
Offenses charged against girls.....	60
Record of previous offenses.....	61
Home conditions as a cause of delinquency.....	61
Whereabouts of the children.....	62
Parental status.....	63
Dependent children under the care of public and private agencies and institutions.....	66
Federal census of dependent and neglected children.....	66
High rate of child dependency in the District.....	67
Public and private care.....	68
Racial distribution.....	69
Ages of children under care.....	70
Ages of children when received for care.....	70
Length of time under care.....	71
Status of parents of dependent children.....	72
Preventing removal from homes.....	74
Child-caring agencies and institutions in the District.....	75
Types of care given dependent children.....	76
Appendix tables.....	80

## LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR,  
CHILDREN'S BUREAU,  
*Washington, January 27, 1938.*

MADAM: I transmit herewith a report of a study of the public child-welfare program of the District of Columbia by Emma O. Lundberg of the Children's Bureau staff. The report is the result of a request of the Board of Public Welfare of the District of Columbia that the Children's Bureau make a study with a view to working out the best possible program for the care of dependent, neglected, delinquent, and defective children in the District of Columbia. The entire report was made available to the Board in manuscript form, and the first part, which presents the conclusions and recommendations of the study, was published separately in 1937.

Together with the study of public institutions for delinquent children in the District by Ruth Bloodgood, published in mimeographed form in 1937, and the study of private institutions and agencies and certain aspects of the public program in the District recently completed by the Child Welfare League of America, this report makes available information on which community planning for the needs of dependent, neglected, and delinquent children may go forward. If these studies are to bear fruit in improved provision for the children for whom the District of Columbia must assume special responsibility, certain changes in both legislation and administrative organization are needed, as well as increased appropriations, to provide opportunities for preventive work with children in their homes before their problems become so acute that the children require long-continued and expensive care as public wards. It will be impossible, however, to provide a broadly comprehensive program for the welfare of the needy children of the District of Columbia until adequate provision is made for public assistance to all families in which children are in need of shelter, food, and care that their parents are unable to provide.

Respectfully submitted.

KATHARINE F. LENROOT, *Chief.*

Hon. FRANCES PERKINS,  
*Secretary of Labor.*



# THE PUBLIC CHILD-WELFARE PROGRAM IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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## PROGRESS TOWARD ADEQUATE CARE AND PROTECTION

### Changes of the Past Twenty Years

At intervals during the past 20 years studies have been made of child-welfare activities in the District of Columbia.<sup>1</sup> All these studies have been undertaken at the request of official boards or committees or local organizations concerned with social welfare, and the findings and recommendations have been accorded careful consideration by the sponsoring organizations as well as by the agencies concerned. Certain changes have been effected, but progress on the whole has been very slow.

Noteworthy gains have been achieved, however, within the past few years. In 1924, after concerted efforts had been made by officials and residents of the District for more than 10 years, an institution for the care of the feeble-minded was established. Twelve years after the first bill for the purpose was introduced in Congress, public aid to dependent children in their own homes was authorized and an appropriation was made available in 1926. Recommendations of the Commission on Public-Welfare Legislation resulted in 1926 in important changes in the law relating to the organization and activities of the public-welfare board. The relief emergency brought recognition of public responsibility for family relief and service, and in August 1932 the Board of Public Welfare created an Emergency Relief Division, later reorganized into a Public-Assistance Division for administration of general relief and the forms of assistance made available through the Social Security Board. In the field of mental hygiene, progress has been made through the establishment of various clinics under private auspices, and there is awareness of the need for a mental-hygiene clinic under the Board of Public Welfare. Activities for improvement of housing conditions are under way. Many other reforms affecting social welfare might be cited.

The problems confronting the Child-Welfare Division of the Board of Public Welfare and the juvenile court are substantially the same today as they were 15 or 20 years ago. Encouragement may be gained from the continuous efforts that have been made to obtain

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<sup>1</sup> Published reports of studies by the U. S. Children's Bureau include: *Mental Defectives in the District of Columbia* (Publication No. 13, Washington, 1915); and *Child Dependency in the District of Columbia*, by Emma O. Lundberg and Mary E. Milburn (Publication No. 140, Washington, 1924). Other reports on studies of administration of public child care by the U. S. Children's Bureau and similar studies by the Child Welfare League of America have been made available in manuscript form. Studies of special phases of child-welfare problems have been made from time to time under the auspices of the Washington Council of Social Agencies and other local organizations.



legislative changes and appropriations that will enable the Board of Public Welfare to carry on its child-caring activities more humanely and effectively. Likewise, the effort to obtain a modern juvenile-court law is a perennial activity in the District, which now seems about to come to fruition. Aside from the gain that has been made through the provision of public aid for dependent children in their own homes and for general relief to families, little progress has been made by public or private agencies in the prevention of child dependency, neglect, and delinquency through constructive measures that will tend to reduce the steady stream flowing into the juvenile court and the Child-Welfare Division of the Board of Public Welfare. Under the limitations that now exist, the work of the court and the public child-caring agency must of necessity deal mainly with ameliorating conditions that have developed through neglect of fundamental social action in behalf of children who need protection and care.

### Scope and Purpose of the Present Study

At the request of the Board of Public Welfare, the present study was undertaken by the Children's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor to assist the Board in planning its child-welfare program. The report that follows is concerned with the legal and administrative foundations of the public child-caring agency, the types of problems that come to the Child-Welfare Division of the Board of Public Welfare and through this Division to the Industrial Home Schools, and the relationship between the Board and the juvenile court, the two public agencies primarily concerned with children in need of care, protection, or correction.

The juvenile court of the District of Columbia is the door through which practically all child-welfare problems enter other public agencies. The policies and methods of the court, its legal limitations, and its equipment are therefore of vital importance to the whole child-welfare program of the District. The present study relates to the court only with respect to its policies and practices in committing dependent, neglected, and delinquent children to the Board of Public Welfare.

The Child-Welfare Division and the juvenile court gave the fullest cooperation to the Children's Bureau, and everything possible was done to facilitate the study. Information was obtained in regard to dependent, neglected, and delinquent children dealt with during specified periods, through compilation and analysis of statistical data and through reading and summarizing a large number of case records in the files of the Child-Welfare Division and the juvenile court. Policies and problems of relationship with other organizations and methods of case treatment were discussed with representatives of the agency and the court.

This report is presented in two parts. The first part gives conclusions and recommendations and suggests next steps in the public child-welfare program. The second and more detailed part of the report, in addition to a discussion of the work of the Child-Welfare Division, includes a section on public aid to dependent children in their own homes, dealing briefly with the "home care" provided by two other Divisions of the Board of Public Welfare. The development of this form of assistance is of the greatest importance to child welfare.

There are also included in this report two statistical sections, one showing the number and types of delinquency cases coming to the attention of the juvenile court in a 4-month period, and the other presenting data on dependent and neglected children under care of public and private agencies and institutions in the District of Columbia. Analysis of the child-care problem dealt with by the public agencies in relation to the whole volume of child care in the District was facilitated by the cooperation of the United States Bureau of the Census, which made available to the Children's Bureau the original reports of the census of dependent children on December 31, 1933, covering all public and private child-caring institutions and agencies in the District.

The study of child-welfare work in the District of Columbia was begun in the fall of 1935, and the analyses of case records in the juvenile court and the Child-Welfare Division, which formed the basis for further inquiry into intake and interrelationships between the two agencies, covered the 4 months, April through July 1935. After an interruption of several months, during which only general contact was maintained with child-welfare developments in the District, the study of case treatment and agency relationships was resumed, and an analysis was made of data relating to children under care of the Board of Public Welfare on November 1, 1936. Data through September 1937 are included in the sections of the report dealing with dependent and delinquent children under care of the Board and with aid to dependent children in their own homes.

Emphasis has been placed upon the nature and causes of child-welfare problems and the social policies and practices of the public child-caring agency and the court in dealing with child dependency, neglect, and delinquency, with the hope that the findings might be of some definite help in planning services for the prevention and constructive treatment of these problems. It has been the aim especially to suggest steps that might be of immediate importance in connection with the cooperation of the District of Columbia in the Federal social-security program for child-welfare services.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*Archaic laws and inadequate funds handicap child welfare.*

Child welfare in the District of Columbia is handicapped by archaic laws that prevent the proper functioning of the juvenile court and the Child-Welfare Division of the Board of Public Welfare. The child-caring agency is seriously understaffed, and additional funds are needed for the care of children in boarding homes.

The juvenile court and the Board of Public Welfare, through its Child-Welfare Division and the institutions under its control, comprise interrelated parts of the public program of child protection, correction, and care. The court provides legal controls and safeguards and case-work services; the Board offers maintenance and service for children who require care that cannot be given by their natural guardians.

The assistance given by the District of Columbia to its children who are in need of special care and protection has suffered because of three major difficulties: (1) Archaic provisions in the law relating to the juvenile court and to the powers and duties of the Board of Public Welfare with reference to child care and protection; (2) failure to provide for adequate staff in the Child-Welfare Division of the Board; (3) maintenance funds that are not sufficient to provide for each child the kind of care needed. Coordinate with these handicaps, and of even greater importance from the point of view of preventing child dependency, neglect, and delinquency, have been the lack of adequate provision for maintenance of children in their own homes, especially in families where the mother alone is responsible for their support, and the insecurity of public funds for family relief.



*Public care for dependent children should be available without court commitment.*

The Board of Public Welfare should be given legal authority and the necessary funds to give such protective service as may be required, and to care for children whose dependency or neglect is not caused by overt misconduct of parents, without court action committing the children to the guardianship of the Board.

The law relating to the public child-welfare agency in the District of Columbia and inadequate funds for care of children in their own homes and for social service have placed the emphasis upon care of children away from their own homes. Children can be received for care only through court commitment to the Board of Public Welfare; unless children are committed by the court, payment from public funds for their maintenance is not allowed under the law for more than 7 days. This means that commitments are often made in order to provide support for children who must be cared for temporarily but for whom some other plan might be made within a short time. Temporary commitments for a few months or a year are repeated, often over a period of years, and many of the children are finally committed as "permanent" or "minority" wards of the Board.

When there is overt parental neglect or mistreatment, or when children have no natural guardian, provision for their guardianship and care must be made through court action, but there is no logic in a situation that makes it impossible for the Board of Public Welfare to furnish care for children who require temporary maintenance during an emergency in the family, just as aid is now given by the Board to families under the Home-Care Act and through its general family-relief administration.

It has long been recognized by those concerned with child welfare in the District of Columbia that the purposes of protection and care of dependent children would be served better if the public agency were enabled to do child-welfare work in its broadly constructive meaning. This requires: (1) Changes in the existing law to permit the Board of Public Welfare to receive children for care without court commitment, except in cases where neglect or mistreatment by parents or other guardians necessitates court action to remove children from their legal custody; (2) expansion of the activities of the Child-Welfare Division so that thorough case-work service may be given by an adequate staff of experienced workers in all cases coming to the attention of the agency, without reference to the question whether the children should be committed as wards of the Board.

*Removal of children from their homes should be determined by investigation and case work.*

Thorough investigation of family conditions and the needs and characteristics of each child should be made in every case in which there is a question of removing the child from his home for care or training. Many children have been committed to the Board for placement in institutions or foster homes before the necessary facts have been obtained, and case work that might have removed the need for commitment has not been available.

Removal of a child from his home, even for a short period, is a major operation and should be resorted to only after a careful diagnosis has been made of the conditions that affect his welfare and it has been found that he cannot obtain the necessary care or discipline without such action. This principle should be axiomatic, but it has not been possible to apply it in all cases coming to the attention of the public agencies in the District.

In order to prevent needless acceptance of children as public wards, for either temporary or permanent care, and to insure for each child the kind of care and treatment he needs, there must be thorough investigation of family conditions and the characteristics of the individual children. In the past, lack of facilities for careful study before court action has meant that many children have been placed in institutions before their home conditions have been investigated sufficiently, and without case-work service to the home that might have prevented the need for removal of the child.

If adequate case-work services were available, acceptance for placement in foster homes or in institutions would occur only when other methods of providing for the children or of safeguarding them in their own homes had failed. If the Board had legal authority to pay for maintenance of children without court commitment, it would be possible to provide temporarily for those who require immediate care but for whom other plans could be made later through case-work services.

With the present limitation imposed upon the Board, children are in danger either of being neglected because the situation does not warrant court action or of being committed to the Board and remaining public wards indefinitely in the absence of assistance needed by the families or of definite action to enforce parental responsibility. Because of its small staff it is not possible for the Child-Welfare Division to maintain the necessary contacts with families of its wards so that the children may be returned to their own homes if home conditions change. Effective case work for children, other than that involved in caring for them in foster homes or institutions, is not at present a part of the child-welfare program of the Board of Public Welfare.

Provision of constructive child-welfare service in the public agency would inevitably result in increasing demands for service that is not now supplied adequately by private or public agencies in the District.

It would probably mean also a reduction in expenditures for maintaining dependent children away from their own homes. The restrictions imposed by archaic laws and wasteful limitations of funds should be replaced by real social service in behalf of children who are in need of special care and safeguards. The Child-Welfare Division of the Board of Public Welfare should become a protective as well as a child-caring agency, equipped to serve all children who need help that is not available from their own families or from private organizations.

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*Types of care should be available to meet individual needs.*

The Child-Welfare Division of the Board of Public Welfare should be enabled to provide for each child who requires care away from his own home the type of care that will best meet his needs. For children who should have certain forms of training or discipline, care in an institution may be desirable; for others, foster-home care, free or with payment of board, may be more suitable. Under present conditions in the District, disposition must often depend upon what is available rather than upon what the individual child requires. The Child-Welfare Division is understaffed, and boarding-home funds are insufficient to provide the care and protection needed.

The Child-Welfare Division makes noteworthy use of foster homes for the care of dependent and neglected children under its guardianship. It also boards children in private institutions or places them in the two Industrial Home Schools. But under present conditions the type of care provided for wards of the Board must often be determined by financial necessity rather than by the needs of each child. This is due in part to lack of adequate funds for payment of board, but even more to the insufficient staff for home finding, placement, and supervision.

For the proper care and training of children committed to the Board because of delinquency, it is essential that funds be available so that foster-family care may be provided whenever this is more desirable for the child than placement in one of the Industrial Home Schools. Case work and supervision for these children require a staff especially equipped for this service. Under present circumstances it appears evident that the public institutions are sometimes used for dependent as well as for delinquent children because the institutions are readily available, rather than because they are particularly suited to the individual needs of the children who are placed there.

There is no magic in foster-home care as such. Unless the home and the child are adjusted to each other, placement in a family home may be as unfortunate as placement in the wrong kind of institution. Certain children will be helped most by training that can be given in an institution, but the institution must be equipped to give real training and not merely custodial care. The only safe rule is to provide for each



child the kind of care and training that is likely to furnish opportunities for healthful development—physical, mental, and spiritual—and that will correct bad habits and compensate in a measure for deprivation of normal home life.

Limitations of staff, as well as insufficient funds for boarding care, prevent the Child-Welfare Division from giving all its wards suitable care. The recommendation has been made repeatedly in previous studies of the work of the Division that the staff engaged in finding boarding homes and free homes should be increased. Likewise there is urgent need for larger child-placing and supervisory staff, so that children requiring foster-home care may be placed in homes that will assure the right kind of care and training for each child.

Not only is a more adequate staff needed for the child-caring and social-service activities of the Child-Welfare Division, but the office force also is very inadequate. With the insufficient stenographic service available at the time of this study, it was impossible to keep the records up to date. Without complete and up-to-date records, treatment and supervision cannot be carried on properly. The Division is seriously handicapped in its efforts to give constructive service to the children placed under its guardianship.

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*Special attention is needed for the colored child.*

Because of economic conditions and resulting bad housing and demoralizing environment, child dependency, neglect, and delinquency are unduly high among the colored population of the District. The care and training of colored children are made more difficult by the absence of necessary facilities, particularly for girls. Work for the prevention of delinquency, dependency, and neglect among colored children must concern itself with fundamental reforms in living conditions and provision of special safeguards for the children.

According to the last Federal census 27 percent of the population of the District of Columbia are colored. Of the children coming before the juvenile court because of delinquency during the period covered by this study, 68 percent were colored; of the children brought before the court as "destitute of a suitable home", 31 percent were colored.

On October 1, 1937, colored children comprised 77 percent of the wards of the Board of Public Welfare who were committed because of delinquency, and 52 percent of those committed because of dependency or neglect.

Case histories in the court and the Child-Welfare Division tell the story for a large number of these children. Mothers who must support the family often go to their places of employment early in the morning and return home late at night, leaving the children to shift for themselves. Lack of opportunities for wholesome activities leads the children into forbidden forms of recreation or into law-breaking—playing ball in alleys, begging, selling without a license, unauthorized use of an automobile which has been left conveniently unlocked, or serious forms of theft or burglary. Nothing, apparently, can be done for the children except to remove them from their homes and place them under the guardianship of the public agency for care in other homes or in institutions. It becomes a never-ending circle of commitments and recommitments.

The solution lies much deeper than in bringing the children before the court and temporarily removing them from poor homes or bad neighborhood influences. Positive action is needed: Removal from insanitary, overcrowded quarters or better still, as the District has long recognized, elimination of the alley dwellings that endanger health and morals; provision of opportunities for wholesome recreation and for the development of interests; and, for children whose mothers must be away from home during the day, special provision for supervised activities during the hours when schools are not in session. A constructive program for the prevention of neglect and delinquency would cost far less than the amount that is now being expended for the ameliorative service given the children who come to the attention of the public agencies in ever-increasing numbers.

Insofar as possible colored wards of the Board of Public Welfare are given the same kind of care as white children. But there is a serious gap in the provision made for colored girls. The Industrial Home School for Colored Children receives only boys. As there is no institution in the District for colored girls, a number of them are boarded in a private institution in Maryland. Other girls who should be given opportunities for training and who need special discipline or supervision are boarded in family homes that are not suited for this responsibility, and "absconding" is prevalent. Another alternative has been commitment to the National Training School for Girls, which, as a result, has had under care about six times as many colored girls as white girls. In connection with the changes contemplated for this institution, consideration may well be given to the whole problem of the care, training, and discipline of delinquent colored girls, safe forms of care for dependent girls, and methods by which the need for institutional care could be decreased.

*Broken homes create child-welfare problems.*

Instability of home life is the cause of a large part of the burden that society now bears through its child-caring and correctional activities. Next to the death of one or both of the parents, illegitimate birth is the largest factor in child dependency in the District of Columbia. Divorce, desertion, and separation account for a considerable part of the child care assumed by public and private agencies and institutions. More than two-fifths of the children who come before the juvenile court because of delinquency are from broken homes. Some of this dependency and delinquency could be prevented if adequate funds were available for relief and constructive service to families.

Illegitimate birth is a large factor in creating child dependency. Of the children included in the United States census of dependent children in the District of Columbia as of December 31, 1933, at least 21 percent were born out of wedlock. Of the white children dependent upon agency and institution care, 13 percent were of illegitimate birth, and of the colored children 35 percent. In contrast to the usual conception of "orphanages", only 9 percent of the children in institutions and foster homes were whole orphans; 12 percent were half-orphans through the death of the father and 16 percent through the death of the mother. The fathers of 5 percent of the children were in penal or other institutions. Including the mothers of children born out of wedlock for whom there were reports, the mothers of 6 percent of the children were in institutions, a considerable number in the District institution for the feeble-minded. The census reports did not show the prevalence of divorce, separation, and desertion.

The background of delinquency is somewhat different from that of dependency, as far as parental status and whereabouts are concerned. Of the children brought before the court because of delinquency, 56 percent came from homes in which parents were living together; 42 percent came from broken homes. There is a significant difference also in the number of cases in which the father was dead—15 percent of the delinquent children were in this group. Two percent were whole orphans. The mother was dead in 7 percent of the cases. Three percent were of illegitimate birth. Two percent were children of divorced parents; the fathers of 6 percent and the mothers of 1 percent had deserted their families. The parents of 8 percent of the children were living apart for other reasons.

These figures on parental status are indications of conditions that lie behind dependency, neglect, and delinquency. The presence of both parents in a home by no means indicates a normal home, as case histories amply testify. But homes broken by the death of a parent, by desertion, divorce, or separation, with the accompanying financial insecurity of mothers left alone to provide for the children, are sources of a large part of the burden that the public is now assuming through its child-caring and correctional activities.



*The rate of child dependency in the District is abnormally high.*

The number of dependent children in the District of Columbia in comparison with the number of children under 18 years of age in the general population is unduly high. Measures for the prevention of needless child dependency would undoubtedly reduce the burden to the public and, more important, would greatly benefit the children. Aid to dependent children in their own homes and other forms of family relief and service are especially important.

Data obtained by the Bureau of the Census in its latest census of dependent children, December 31, 1933, showed that 1,966 children whose residence was the District of Columbia were cared for in institutions or foster homes on the date given. This means that because of dependency or neglect 16 in every 1,000 children under 18 years of age in the population of the District are cared for away from their own homes by public and private organizations.

Approximately 52 percent of the dependent or neglected children belonging in the District of Columbia were cared for at public expense, and 48 percent were cared for by private organizations. Many of these children were not totally dependent upon public or private support, but the number of those under public care for whose maintenance some contribution is made by relatives is comparatively small, and in all cases some part of the cost must be borne by the agencies.

Care had been provided for 33 percent of the children for 5 years or more. Some of them had been in institutions or foster homes for 15 years or more.

In the entire number of dependent and neglected children the racial distribution did not differ greatly from the racial distribution in the general population. Two-thirds of the dependent and neglected children were white and one-third were colored. Maintenance for colored children is provided chiefly by the Board of Public Welfare; comparatively little provision is made for them by private organizations. Of the wards of the Board of Public Welfare 58 percent were colored, whereas only 9 percent of the children provided for by private organizations were colored.

Forty-seven percent of the dependent children cared for by the 20 public and private agencies and institutions located in the District of Columbia were in institutions; 43 percent were in family homes in which board was paid; 8 percent were in free homes; and 2 percent were in wage or work homes.

The Child-Welfare Division uses boarding-home care extensively; 75 percent of its wards were boarded in family homes; 8 percent were in institutions; and 17 percent were in free, wage, or work homes. Private organizations, on the other hand, cared for 92 percent of their children in institutions, only 7 percent in boarding homes, and 1 percent in free homes.

As a result of this difference in methods of care used by public and private organizations, 65 percent of all dependent and neglected white

children were in institutions, 29 percent in boarding homes, and 6 percent in free or work homes. Of the colored children, on the other hand, only 11 percent were in institutions, 72 percent were in boarding homes, and 17 percent were in free or work homes. The care provided for each dependent child should meet his individual needs. The study indicated that the availability of certain types of provision often determines the kind of care a child receives. This is true particularly of the private organizations, although financial considerations and the existence of institutions also determine the type of care given by the public agency.

In its rate of dependent children, Washington ranks second among the 31 city or county areas in the United States whose populations, according to the last census, range from 250,000 to a million. This record emphasizes the need for measures that would assist in eliminating causes of child dependency. Aid to dependent children in their own homes is one method whose effectiveness has been demonstrated, in the District as elsewhere. On the basis of data reported to the Bureau of the Census for cases in which the mother was in the home and the father absent, it is estimated that at least 300 of the children who were in institutions or foster homes might have been eligible for public aid in their own homes.

Family relief and service are means of preventing child dependency and neglect. It is of the greatest importance to child welfare in all its phases that adequate funds be provided for general public assistance to needy families and that the present development of aid to dependent children in their own homes continue along lines that will insure adequate aid and constructive service.

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*Child dependency, neglect, and delinquency can be prevented.*

Prevention of child dependency or neglect and of juvenile delinquency is concerned largely with the same basic problems. Detrimental conditions in the home or in the environment lie at the root of most of the difficulties that bring children to the attention of courts and protective and child-caring agencies. Individual maladjustment can usually be traced to this origin. Prevention must deal with sources.

Child dependency, neglect, and delinquency can be prevented. Constructive action for the reduction of these problems must deal with conditions in the home, the neighborhood, and the community, as well as with causes of individual maladjustment. Absence of healthy family life, because of social or economic conditions in the home, deprivation of the interests and activities needed for normal development, mental subnormality or abnormality of the individual—these are the sources of most of the difficulties that necessitate intervention for the care, protection, or discipline of children. Neglect



of preventive measures places an ever-increasing burden upon the public child-caring and correctional agencies.

There is no doubt much truth in the agencies' assertion that the majority of the children committed to public care in the District of Columbia as dependent, neglected, or delinquent require this drastic action because of home conditions detrimental to their welfare. At the point where most cases now come to the attention of the public agencies foster care appears usually to be a logical conclusion. At an earlier stage, case work with families and with individual children, accompanied by maintenance aid where required, might have prevented the necessity for removal of children from their homes. Moreover, there are many children who because of poverty or other demoralizing conditions in their homes need assistance or safeguards that they are not now receiving, and many potential delinquents who could be saved from careers of delinquency if they were given greater security at home, protected from degrading influences, and provided with the proper outlets for their natural love of adventure.

When a child has been removed from his home, for whatever reason, restoration to the home is much more difficult than prevention of the family break-up would have been. To avoid removing children from homes in which they might be cared for properly or to make it possible to return them to homes from which they must be removed temporarily, it is necessary to have available adequate aid to families who cannot maintain good home conditions without assistance. The mothers' aid or Home-Care Act of the District of Columbia has made it possible for many homes to be kept intact when the father is dead, absent from the home, or incapacitated. It is not possible to measure statistically the effect upon the volume of child dependency, neglect, and delinquency, but there can be no question that such aid plays a vital part in all phases of child welfare. Much more than has been possible in the past needs to be done by the Board of Public Welfare in general family relief and service as well as in the special form of assistance to children dependent upon the mother for support, for which funds are available under the Social Security Act.

Prevention of delinquency has two aspects: (1) Correcting conditions likely to lead to delinquency and helping boys and girls to overcome tendencies and practices that get them into trouble; (2) saving those who have committed delinquencies from the necessity for legal action in court. Both these aspects require early and definite case work with the child and his environment. Of great importance in the reduction of juvenile delinquency and affecting a much larger number of children than those coming to the attention of the court is the preventive work that may be done by the schools and by public and private social agencies through effective treatment of behavior problems of children and rehabilitative service for families. Modernizing the Juvenile-Court Act will make it possible for the court to deal with delinquency more constructively and to cooperate more effectively with public and private child-welfare agencies for the prevention of juvenile delinquency.

Sufficient recognition has not been given to the importance of mental defect as a cause of dependency, neglect, and delinquency. Institutional care and training of mentally defective children have been made available within recent years to a much greater extent than formerly.

But even if the District Training School were equipped to receive all those who are known to require custody or training, it by no means represents the entire program needed for protection of the mentally defective children of the District. Supervision of feeble-minded persons in the community, including those paroled from the institution, should be provided for by the Board of Public Welfare, in addition to the care and training provided by the District Training School and the special classes in the public schools. Adequate provision for mental examination and psychiatric study and treatment is an essential part of a program of prevention of social maladjustment.

The legal and financial handicaps now imposed upon the juvenile court and upon the child-welfare activities of the Board of Public Welfare stand in the way of constructive work by these agencies. The work of private child-caring and protective agencies and institutions, which care for almost half the dependent or partly dependent children in the District, is no less vital than the public child-welfare program. The intake policies of institutions and the extent to which institutions apply or fail to apply social-work principles are important factors in the control of child dependency.

For the prevention of dependency, neglect, and delinquency there must be greater coordination of the services of public and private child-welfare organizations in the District and integration of the work of child-welfare and family-relief and service agencies so that preservation of the home may be the primary consideration whenever possible. Not only the maintenance and protection that public and private welfare agencies can give, but the other fundamental needs of children must be supplied, by utilizing community resources for health conservation, spiritual and moral development, education, and recreation.

## NEXT STEPS IN DEVELOPING A CHILD-WELFARE PROGRAM

The juvenile court and the Child-Welfare Division of the Board of Public Welfare, together with the institutions under the jurisdiction of the Board, constitute the public agencies maintained by the District of Columbia for the care, protection, and correction of dependent, neglected, and delinquent children whose needs are not met by the provision for home care of dependent children and for general family relief. In addition, the National Training School for Boys receives delinquent boys committed by the juvenile court of the District of Columbia. The services of the Board of Public Welfare and the juvenile court should be so developed as to afford a coordinated and complete program of care and protection for all children in need of assistance by public agencies.

In order to develop such a program certain changes in the laws relating to the juvenile court and the Board of Public Welfare are necessary. They include:

1. Complete revision of the juvenile-court law to provide procedure in accordance with modern and generally accepted juvenile-court standards.<sup>2</sup>
2. Revision of the law relating to the Board of Public Welfare, so that the Board may provide protective service for any child who is neglected, dependent, or mentally defective, or who is in danger of becoming delinquent; and so that the Board may, at the request of parents, guardians, or social agencies having custody of a child, provide such care as may be needed without commitment by the court, except in cases where court adjudication of custody or guardianship is necessary.
3. Provision for admitting girls to the National Training School for Girls without court commitment, so that the Board of Public Welfare may use this institution on the same basis as the Industrial Home Schools; removal of the restrictions on funds of the National Training School for Girls and on the "board and care" appropriations of the Child-Welfare Division, so that foster care may be provided for girls on parole from the school.

Until these changes are made in the law governing public child care and protection in the District and until adequate funds are appropriated by Congress, the Child-Welfare Division of the Board of Public Welfare cannot provide the services needed for dependent, neglected, and delinquent children. In addition to legal authority to provide care for dependent children without court commitment and without

<sup>2</sup> A bill (H. R. 4276), which would provide for juvenile-court work in the District of Columbia a legal foundation in accordance with the best standards of juvenile-court procedure, was passed by the House on Mar. 1, 1937, and amended and passed by the Senate on Aug. 14, 1937. It was sent to conference on Aug. 17, 1937, and may be acted on at any time before the close of the Seventy-fifth Congress.



the present limit of 7 days, outstanding needs of the Child-Welfare Division include:

1. A staff of social workers, clerks, and stenographers large enough to permit adequate investigation and case-work services, to provide suitable foster homes for all children under its care who require such homes, and to give to all children for whom it is responsible the degree of supervision and the kind of assistance demanded by modern standards of child care.
2. Provision for covering the cost to the United States Civil Service Commission of setting up examinations for social-work positions in the District of Columbia government for which examinations for Federal departments are not appropriate. Reallocation of civil-service grades for case workers and supervisors in order to make it possible to employ persons with the requisite training and experience in social case work and to raise the salary scale throughout the Division.
3. A greatly expanded department of intake and social service to provide protective services for neglected children and such case work as will obviate the necessity of foster-home and institutional care for dependent children whenever possible.
4. Reorganization of child-placing activities, eliminating the present classification according to the presumable length of time children will remain under care, and assuring continuity of work with individual children.
5. Development of a department with especially equipped workers for care and supervision of children committed to the Board by the juvenile court because of delinquency and those for whom the court may, by informal arrangement, request temporary care or supervision.
6. Increased funds for boarding-home care so that children who are not in need of the types of care and training provided by public or private institutions may be placed in carefully selected family homes.
7. Practical coordination with the Divisions of Public Assistance and Home Care for Dependent Children of the Board of Public Welfare with respect to applications and intake, and such interchange of services as will give to these two Divisions the benefit of special child-welfare services in families receiving public aid and will place primary emphasis upon maintenance of a child's own home whenever possible through assistance and supervision.
8. Provision of a public mental-hygiene clinic which can serve the schools, the court, and the Board of Public Welfare, making psychological and psychiatric service available to all children under supervision or care of the Child-Welfare Division.

For the prevention of child dependency, neglect, and delinquency there is need not only for constructive services by the child-caring and correctional agencies, but for community action that will affect the sources of dependency and maladjustment, including—

1. Rehabilitation of homes whenever possible, instead of the easier, but from all points of view more expensive, maintenance of children away from their own homes by public or private agencies.
2. Adequate funds and maintenance of proper standards for public aid to children in their own homes.
3. Provision of adequate relief and service to needy families not in the categories for which Federal funds are granted.
4. Coordinated planning for the activities of private and public child-caring agencies and institutions, so that every child may be assured of the kind of care he needs instead of the care given being dependent upon the type of provision that happens to be available.
5. A comprehensive program for the care, training, and protection of the mentally defective, including adequate facilities for care and training both in the District Training School and in special classes of the public schools, and provision by the Board of Public Welfare for supervision of feeble-minded children in the community, including those on parole from the District Training School.
6. Development of adequate facilities for the care and training of colored dependent, neglected, and delinquent children, especially girls.
7. Study of the relation of bad housing, demoralizing environment, and lack of recreational facilities to the high dependency and delinquency rates among colored children.
8. Study of the whole problem of illegitimacy; inauguration of constructive legal and social measures for assistance of unmarried mothers; protection of the rights of mother and child; enforcement of parental obligations for support; and protection of children from the exploitation that results from unsupervised placements and transfers of custody.
9. Enactment of laws regulating transfer of guardianship and providing legal and social safeguards for adoption.
10. Further development of coordinated planning and action on a neighborhood or district basis for constructive recreational opportunities, wholesome neighborhood conditions, and methods of early discovery and treatment of problems of child neglect and delinquency.

Under title 5, part 3, of the Social Security Act, Child-Welfare Services, an annual allotment of \$10,000 to the District of Columbia Board of Public Welfare is authorized on the basis of a plan formulated jointly by the Board and the United States Children's Bureau for services to children who are dependent, neglected, or in danger of becoming delinquent. A program for child-welfare services under a plan approved by the Children's Bureau on May 8, 1936, was inaugu-

rated by the Board of Public Welfare, with the cooperation of representatives of other public and private agencies. The main objective is to demonstrate the need for adequate case-work services and the practical results that may be attained in the prevention of child dependency, neglect, and delinquency. With the limited funds available, this work will necessarily be restricted, but it should afford a means of showing the types of services that must be made available throughout the District for the protection of its socially handicapped children. [A brief report of child-welfare services in the District of Columbia was written by A. Madorah Donahue, Director of the Child-Welfare Demonstration Unit, Board of Public Welfare, and published in the Children's Bureau monthly periodical, *The Child*, for September 1937.]

## LEGAL BACKGROUND OF CHILD CARE AND PROTECTION IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

### Origin and Jurisdiction of the Public Child-Welfare Agency

In 1890 Congress created the office of Superintendent of Charities for the District of Columbia, which was superseded in 1900 by the Board of Charities. In 1892 the Board of Children's Guardians was created. Under an act of 1926, reorganizing the public-welfare activities of the District, both these Boards were abolished and their powers and duties were vested in a Board of Public Welfare.<sup>3</sup> A Child-Welfare Division was established in the new Board of Public Welfare to continue the work of the Board of Children's Guardians.

The Public-Welfare Act of 1926 includes the following provisions:

(a) The Board may make temporary provision for the care of children pending investigation of their status; (b) to have the care and legal guardianship of children who may be committed by courts of competent jurisdiction and to make such provision for their care and maintenance, either temporarily or permanently, in private homes or in public or private institutions, as the welfare of the child may require. The Board shall cause all of its wards placed out under care to be visited as often as may be required to safeguard their welfare and when children are placed in family homes or private institutions, so far as practicable such homes or institutions shall be in control of persons of like faith with the parents of such children: \* \* \* (c) to provide care and maintenance for feeble-minded children who may be received upon application or court commitment, in institutions equipped to receive them, within or without the District of Columbia.

The act provides that "the foregoing enumeration shall not be in derogation of any further powers or duties now vested by law in the Board of Children's Guardians, and such powers and duties are hereby vested in the Board."

Hence the law governing the public child-caring and protective work of the District of Columbia is found not only in the Public-Welfare Act of 1926 but in measures enacted during the past 50 years. It needs clarification and amendment with reference to powers and duties of the child-caring agency and of the courts.

Prior to the creation of the Board of Children's Guardians an act of 1885 "for the protection of children in the District of Columbia" reestablished the Association for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals for the District of Columbia as the Washington Humane Society and authorized it to extend its operations to the protection of children as well as animals from cruelty and abuse. The act provided that any child "subjected to cruel treatment, willful abuse, or neglect, or any child under 16 years of age found in a house of ill fame" could be brought before the police court, and this court was empowered to commit such children to an orphan asylum or other public charitable institution.<sup>4</sup> When the Board of Children's Guardians was created in 1892 it was given the care and supervision of children of the follow-

<sup>3</sup> 26 Stat. 308; 27 Stat. 268; 31 Stat. 664; 44 Stat. 208.

<sup>4</sup> 23 Stat. 302.



ing classes: All children committed under the act of 1885; and all children under 16 years of age "destitute of suitable homes and adequate means of earning an honest living, all children abandoned by their parents or guardians, all children of habitually drunken or vicious or unfit parents, all children habitually begging on the streets or from door to door, all children kept in vicious or immoral associations, all children known by their language or life to be vicious or incorrigible," whenever such children were committed to the Board by the police court or the criminal court of the District.

The Board was empowered to make temporary provision for the care of children, pending investigation or judgment of the court. Legal guardianship of all the children committed to it was given to the Board, and it was authorized to board children in private families or in institutions willing to receive them, to bind them out or to apprentice them, or to give them in adoption to foster parents.

The reform schools for boys and for girls <sup>5</sup> were authorized to commit children in those institutions to the Board, which was authorized to place such children at work, to bind them out or to apprentice them, also to return them to the school from which they came, at any time before their majority. The law specified that children received temporarily should not be kept longer than 1 week, except by court order.

In 1893 authority for placing feeble-minded children was transferred from the Secretary of the Interior to the Board of Children's Guardians.<sup>6</sup>

In 1901 Congress provided that children under 17 years of age "convicted of a petty crime or misdemeanor" might be committed temporarily or permanently by the judges of criminal and police courts to the custody and care of the Board of Children's Guardians. The Board was authorized to "place, under contract, such children in such suitable homes, institutions, or training schools for the care of children as it may deem wise and proper." For the purpose of aiding the court in a proper disposition of children, the Board was directed to designate one of its employees as probation officer to make such investigations as the court might direct and to represent the interests of the child when the case was heard.<sup>7</sup>

An act to create a juvenile court in the District of Columbia was passed in 1906;<sup>8</sup> it vested in this court original and exclusive jurisdiction (with certain exceptions) "of all crimes and offenses of persons under 17 years of age" committed against the United States within the District of Columbia, and of all offenses committed by such persons against the laws, ordinances, and regulations of the District. The powers and jurisdiction conferred on the police court by the law of 1885 for the protection of children were transferred to the juvenile court. Jurisdiction concurrent with the criminal court was given to the juvenile court over parents or guardians refusing or neglecting to provide food, clothing, and shelter for any child under 14 years of age.

The juvenile court was given power to deal with cases of children under 17 years of age charged with habitual truancy and, at its discretion, to commit them to the Board of Children's Guardians. In 1912 authority to hear cases involving determination of paternity of illegiti-

<sup>5</sup> Later called the National Training School for Boys and the National Training School for Girls.

<sup>6</sup> 27 Stat. 552.

<sup>7</sup> 31 Stat. 1905.

<sup>8</sup> 34 Stat. 73.



mate children and orders for their support was given to the juvenile court.<sup>9</sup>

The juvenile-court law provides that "all children of the class now liable to be committed to the reform school for boys and the reform school for girls shall hereafter be committed by the juvenile court to said schools respectively. All other children delinquent, neglected, or dependent \* \* \* shall hereafter be committed by the juvenile court to the care of the Board of Children's Guardians, either for a limited period on probation or during minority, as circumstances may require, and no child once committed to any public institution by the order of the juvenile court shall be discharged or paroled therefrom or transferred to another institution without the consent and approval of the said court."

The juvenile-court law defines a dependent or neglected child as "any child who is destitute or homeless or abandoned or dependent upon the public for support, or who has not the proper parental care or guardianship, or who habitually begs or receives alms, or whose home, by reason of neglect or cruelty or depravity of the parents, is an unfit place for such a child, or any child under 8 years of age found peddling on the streets." The term "delinquent child" includes "any child who has been convicted more than once of violating any law of the United States, or any laws, ordinances, or regulations in force in the District of Columbia."

A law of 1906 declared nonsupport of wife or of children under 16 a misdemeanor punishable by fine or by imprisonment in the workhouse at hard labor or by both such fine and imprisonment. Jurisdiction in such cases was vested in the juvenile court by laws of 1910 and 1912.<sup>10</sup> In 1922 the United States Supreme Court held that the penalty of imprisonment "at hard labor" made violation of the act an infamous crime. As the juvenile court does not have jurisdiction over infamous crimes, it could not assume jurisdiction over nonsupport under this law.<sup>11</sup> In 1926 Congress corrected the difficulty by striking from the 1906 law on nonsupport the words "at hard labor."<sup>12</sup>

Legal authority with respect to its powers and functions has been given to the Board of Children's Guardians not only through direct legislation by Congress but also in annual appropriation acts. Thus the appropriation act for the year ended June 30, 1922, provided that no part of the moneys appropriated should be used for the purpose of visiting any ward of the Board of Children's Guardians placed outside the District of Columbia and the States of Virginia and Maryland, and a ward so placed must be visited not less than once a year by a voluntary agent or correspondent of the Board. It also provided that the Board "shall have power, upon proper showing, in its discretion, to discharge from guardianship any child committed to its care." These provisions, unchanged except as to the name of the Board, have been repeated in the appropriation acts for each subsequent year.<sup>13</sup>

### Institutions Under the Board of Public Welfare

When the District of Columbia public-welfare activities were reorganized in 1926 the two Industrial Home Schools for children were placed under the management of the Board of Public Welfare. *The*

<sup>9</sup> 37 Stat. 134.

<sup>10</sup> 34 Stat. 86; 36 Stat. 403; 37 Stat. 134.

<sup>11</sup> *United States v. Moreland*, 258 U. S. 253.

<sup>12</sup> 44 Stat. 716.

<sup>13</sup> 41 Stat. 1137 and later appropriation acts.

*Industrial Home School* receives white boys and girls, delinquent, dependent, and neglected. *The Industrial Home School for Colored Children* receives delinquent, dependent, and neglected boys.<sup>14</sup>

*The Industrial Home School* was organized as a private institution in 1879 and was transferred to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia in 1896. It was placed under the Board of Children's Guardians in 1923.

In 1907 the District opened a separate institution for colored children. Congressional appropriations had been made in 1904 and 1905 for plans and the erection of buildings for the *Industrial Home School for Colored Children* and in 1906 for completion of the buildings and salaries of the staff.<sup>15</sup>

In the early years children were admitted to the *Industrial Home School* independently of the Board of Children's Guardians as well as through the Board. Since 1913 both institutions have received children only through the Board of Public Welfare. Delinquent or dependent children committed to the Board of Public Welfare by the juvenile court may be placed in these institutions at the discretion of the Child-Welfare Division of the Board. It was formerly the practice of the juvenile court to specify at the time of commitment the institution in which children were to be placed by the agency; its practice in recent years has been to leave the type of placement to the discretion of the Board.

In October 1928 the Board of Public Welfare opened the *Receiving Home for Children*, described in the act of Congress making appropriation for it as a place for the reception and detention of children under 17 years of age pending hearing or otherwise.<sup>16</sup> This institution has a capacity of 50 and is used to some extent by the Child-Welfare Division for temporary care of children, mainly children committed because of delinquency, pending placement in the Industrial Home Schools or elsewhere, and for other emergencies. It is also used by the juvenile court and the police for all types of children needing temporary care or safekeeping.

In the 1926 reorganization of District of Columbia welfare activities the *National Training School for Girls* was placed under the Board of Public Welfare. This institution is authorized to receive colored girls under 17 years of age through commitment by the juvenile court or other court of the District.<sup>17</sup>

*The National Training School for Boys*, which is under the control of a board of trustees appointed by the President of the United States upon the recommendation of the Attorney General, is authorized to receive boys under 17 committed by the District juvenile court and other courts, also boys from the various States committed for violation of Federal laws. Maintenance of boys committed from the District is paid for under contract by the Board of Public Welfare.<sup>18</sup>

The Board of Children's Guardians, which in 1893 was made responsible for placement of feeble-minded children, furnished a limited amount of care in institutions in nearby States and in private institu-

<sup>14</sup> In 1935-36 the Children's Bureau made a study of the two Industrial Home Schools and of the National Training School for Girls and the National Training School for Boys. (Public Institutions for Delinquent Children in the District of Columbia, by Ruth Bloodgood. U. S. Children's Bureau, Washington, 1937. Mimeographed.)

<sup>15</sup> 29 Stat. 410; 33 Stat. 388; 34 Stat. 511; 42 Stat. 1361.

<sup>16</sup> 45 Stat. 672. This institution was not included in the study made by the Children's Bureau in 1935-36 because a committee had already undertaken a comprehensive inquiry with reference especially to intake.

<sup>17</sup> 25 Stat. 245; 34 Stat. 73; 37 Stat. 171; 47 Stat. 301; D. C. Code, title 8, sec. 218.

<sup>18</sup> 19 Stat. 49; 34 Stat. 73; 35 Stat. 380; 44 Stat. 210; 47 Stat. 301; D. C. Code, title 8, sec. 185.

tions and boarding homes. *The District Training School*, established under an act of 1923 "for the custody, care, education, training, and treatment of feeble-minded persons", is under the control and supervision of the Board of Public Welfare. Subject to provisions of the law and rules and regulations of the Board, any feeble-minded person not over 45 years of age may be received into this institution.<sup>19</sup> The Child-Welfare Division of the Board of Public Welfare investigates applications for admission to the District Training School. Commitments are made by the District Court of the United States for the District of Columbia.<sup>20</sup>

### Home Care of Dependent Children

After many years of effort on the part of the District of Columbia to obtain provisions similar to those in the mothers' aid or mothers' pension laws in force in most of the States, Congress in 1926 enacted a law providing for public aid to children in their own homes and vested its administration in the Board of Public Welfare, which established a Home-Care Division. The development of this form of aid and the present provision for aid to dependent children in their own homes under the Social Security Act are discussed in a later section of this report. (See p. 49.)

<sup>19</sup> 42 Stat. 1360; 43 Stat. 1135; 44 Stat. 210.

<sup>20</sup> Formerly the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia (43 Stat. 1135; 49 Stat. 1921).



## ORGANIZATION AND STAFF OF THE CHILD-WELFARE DIVISION

### Responsibilities and Personnel

The responsibilities and authority of the Child-Welfare Division of the Board of Public Welfare have been described in the foregoing discussion of laws covering child care and protection in the District of Columbia. It has been shown that the Board may receive dependent, neglected, and delinquent children on commitment by the juvenile court, for temporary or permanent care, assuming legal guardianship of all children so committed. Children may be boarded in private families or in institutions, or placed with foster families for free care or for adoption. According to the law, children may be bound out or indentured; but this practice was discontinued in 1914, and no wards of the Board remained in apprenticeship or on indenture after December 1922.

The Board is authorized to care for children pending investigation. Appropriation acts include funds for "temporary care of children pending investigation", as well as for children committed to guardianship of the Board. The Child-Welfare Division of the Board investigates cases of dependency or neglect referred to it by other agencies or individuals, and, insofar as its small staff permits, it gives case-work service and adjusts difficulties without receiving the children as wards. The Board is enjoined from using its funds for maintenance of children for more than 7 days unless the children are committed to its guardianship. If investigation shows the need for commitment, the facts are presented to the Corporation Counsel, and a petition is prepared for the juvenile court asking that the children be committed to the Board of Public Welfare. The parents are summoned to bring the children to court, and the case is heard with witnesses for both sides.

The Chief of the Child-Welfare Division is subject to the general supervision of the Director of Public Welfare. Three members of the Board of Public Welfare comprise the children's committee, which considers all matters relating to the care of wards, appointment and dismissal of staff, and specific cases requiring formal action by the Board.

As it is at present constituted,<sup>21</sup> the Child-Welfare Division has the following five departments: Administration; investigation and temporary care; permanent care; home finding; and medical care and supervision. In addition to the Chief of the Child-Welfare Division, the department of administration includes seven employees: secretary, financial clerk, reception clerk, clothing clerk, assistant clothing clerk, record clerk, and a chauffeur who drives a District car for case workers taking children to clinics and to foster homes.

<sup>21</sup> March 15, 1937. Description of duties and data regarding staff and case loads are based on information furnished by the Chief of the Child-Welfare Division.



*Investigation and temporary-care department.*

All applications to the Board for care of dependent children and complaints alleging neglect, cruel treatment, or immoral surroundings are dealt with by the investigation and temporary-care department. The staff of this department determines whether the request or complaint is justified, and the case workers study the situation in the home and assemble social data in regard to the family and the child. When it is possible, cases are referred to other public or private organizations or action is taken to adjust difficulties without having the children committed to the Board. If court action is necessary, the department must be prepared to prove culpability of parents in neglect cases.

The investigation and temporary-care department makes social investigations, arranges for examination by the court alienist, and presents cases to the District Court of the United States for the District of Columbia for commitment of feeble-minded persons to the District Training School. At the request of the Court the department makes social investigations in cases involving custody of children and in adoption cases.

The staff of this department places and supervises wards committed to the guardianship of the Board for temporary care. At the expiration of temporary commitments the department again investigates conditions in the families from which the children were removed and presents the findings at court hearings for discharge or recommitment of temporary wards. The department files nonsupport information against parents or wards when investigation shows that a parent has an earning capacity.

Following is a list of the staff of the investigation and temporary-care department, with brief summaries of their duties as of March 15, 1937:

*Supervisor.*—Directs the work of social investigation of dependency and neglect cases and case-work service in the family home; makes recommendation to the Chief of the Child-Welfare Division in regard to court action; determines the type of care and the program for children committed as temporary wards; passes on problems to be accepted for service; assigns cases for field investigation; has direct supervision of four case workers assigned to these investigations; and passes on all institutional placements.

*Assistant supervisor.*—Handles all applications for care at the District Training School and is the legal representative of the Corporation Counsel's office at hearings on these cases in the District Court of the United States for the District of Columbia; represents the Board at juvenile-court hearings on dependency and neglect cases known to the Division; has direct supervision of three case workers who place and supervise children committed for temporary care and who make the social investigations and report to the court at the expiration of temporary commitments.

Six senior case workers and one junior case worker (women unless otherwise indicated), as follows:

*Case worker No. 1:* Makes social investigations of all cases of colored children referred for investigation and report without commitment by the court; supervises 30 children in foster homes who have histories of behavior difficulties and 10 children under guardianship who are placed in homes of parents or relatives; serves as contact worker with the Industrial Home School for Colored Children; handles emergency problems.

*Case worker No. 2:* Makes investigations of cases of dependent and neglected colored children reported directly to the Board; does continuing case work for children not committed to the Board; presents an average of 4 cases a month to the juvenile court; supervises about 35 temporary wards in boarding homes or homes of relatives.

*Case worker No. 3:* Supervises 109 temporary wards, 64 of whom are in boarding homes, 30 in institutions, and 15 in their own homes; is responsible for case work in the parental homes for children committed as dependent or neglected; prepares reports for the juvenile court on these homes and on the needs of the children at expiration of commitments.

*Case worker No. 4 (man):* Makes social investigation of cases of dependent and neglected white children reported directly to the Board; does continuing case work for children not committed to the Board; presents cases to juvenile court; supervises 21 wards committed without advance information to the Board, 13 of whom are in institutions and 8 in foster homes; handles an average of 12 new cases a month.

*Case worker No. 5:* Supervises 93 temporary wards committed as dependent or neglected, 60 of whom are in foster homes, 23 in institutions, and 10 in homes of relatives; is responsible for service in parental homes during commitment period of children; at expiration of commitment prepares information for the court on the home and the needs of the child.

*Case worker No. 6:* Makes investigations in cases of dependent and neglected children reported directly to the Child-Welfare Division; averages 10 new cases a month; supervises 33 children in foster homes.

*Case worker No. 7:* Supervises 100 colored wards, particularly older girls committed as delinquent or having a history of sex delinquencies or other behavior problems (65 in boarding homes and 35 in institutions); is responsible for case-work service and court reports.

The department has two clerical-stenographic workers.

### *Permanent-care department.*

The permanent-care department is responsible for placement and supervision of all children committed to the permanent guardianship of the Board, in boarding homes, free homes, private institutions, and institutions under the Board of Public Welfare. The department has a staff of 14, as follows: 1 supervisor; 1 assistant supervisor; 5 senior case workers; 5 junior case workers; and 2 clerical-stenographic workers who transcribe from the dictaphone. The responsibilities and case loads of the workers are described as follows:

*Supervisor.*—Has general supervision over reception of children by department; makes assignments to case workers and assists them in planning for the care and training of the children; holds case conferences with workers; gives general approval of placements, removals, unusual expenditures, adoptions, discharge from guardianship, and transfer to inactive file.

*Assistant supervisor.*—Has direct supervision over 2 case workers; supervises an average of 64 children, about 43 of them in foster homes, 8 in institutions, and 13 in the homes of parents or relatives.

Ten senior and junior case workers (women unless otherwise indicated), as follows:

*Case worker No. 1:* Has a case load averaging 114 children, about 75 of them in boarding, wage, and free homes; makes placements in city and suburban areas; supervises white children in large family groups.

*Case worker No. 2:* Has an average of 129 cases, undifferentiated as to race of child and type of problem, mainly children in outlying territory in Maryland, about 94 of the children in foster homes, mainly boarding homes.

*Case worker No. 3:* Has an average case load of 133, undifferentiated as to race of child and type of problem, mainly children in outlying territory in Virginia, 110 of the children in foster homes, 10 in institutions, and 13 in own homes.

*Case worker No. 4 (man):* Supervises 117 colored boys, 38 in boarding, free, and wage homes, 30 in own homes, and 49 in public and private institutions and the Civilian Conservation Corps.

*Case worker No. 5:* Has an average case load of 114 children and older girls in foster homes who have no unusual needs; makes placements mainly in city or suburban areas.

*Case worker No. 6:* Has a case load of 100, all colored children, 74 in foster homes, 8 in institutions, and 18 in own homes.

*Case worker No. 7:* Has a case load of 105, mainly older white girls and children who have marked emotional problems, 68 in foster homes, 26 in own homes, and 11 in institutions.

*Case worker No. 8 (man):* Has a case load of 94, mainly older white boys, about 36 in boarding, free, and wage homes, 25 in institutions, and 33 in homes of parents.

*Case worker No. 9:* Has a case load of 109 colored children, especially older girls, about 70 in foster homes, 12 in institutions, and the rest mainly in homes of parents or other relatives.

*Case worker No. 10 (new worker):* Supervises approximately 20 children under 3 years of age, all in foster homes.

### *Home-finding department.*

Recruiting, studying, and selecting foster homes for boarding or free care and having them available for placement of children are the responsibility of the home-finding department. This department has four employees: the supervisor, two senior case workers, and one clerical and stenographic worker. The two case workers investigate applications from persons wishing to have children placed with them for board or for free care. One of these workers is assigned especially to investigation of applications for the care of Catholic children.

### *Department of medical care and supervision.*

The health-supervision program for all wards is provided by the department of medical care and supervision. Three physicians employed part time by the Board of Public Welfare hold clinics 3 days a week in quarters provided by the Children's Hospital. All children received for care, with the exception of the boys at the Industrial Home School for Colored Children, for whom there is special provision, are given complete physical examination on the days they are received or as soon thereafter as possible. They are listed for a reexamination in 6 months or for more frequent observation if special conditions require it. Children unable to come to the clinic are visited in their foster homes by the head physician. A senior nurse and two assistant nurses assist the clinic physicians and do follow-up work for children in foster homes.

In addition to the three assistant physicians serving with the clinic, a pediatrician, classified as senior physician and employed part time, is responsible for the standard of health protection provided for wards of the Board, organization of the general clinical program, and cooperative relationships with treatment clinics. This physician examines all children under 7 years of age. A dentist employed part time works under the direction of the Chief of the Child-Welfare Division, in cooperation with the medical service. He conducts dental clinics for wards of the Board 4 half days a week. The part-time salaries of the physicians and the dentist and the salaries of the nurses are paid from the Division's appropriation for "board and care."

### **Outstanding Needs of the Child-Welfare Division**

The foregoing data in regard to responsibilities of the staff and the case loads of the workers in the department of investigation and temporary care and the department of permanent care speak for themselves. They show graphically the task that the Child-Welfare Division must assume with a staff far too small. It is generally conceded that no worker charged with placement and supervision of children in boarding homes or other types of foster-family care should handle a case load of more than 50 children. This is especially true if his work includes, as it should, case work with the child's own family.



In the department of investigation and temporary care the case workers have a large field of responsibility, including initial investigation, preparation of reports for presentation to the court at the expiration of temporary commitments, and such case-work service as they can give to families of children who are not accepted for foster care and to children committed temporarily. In addition, some of the workers of this department are responsible for placement and supervision of more children in foster homes than would normally be assigned to them if they had no other duties. These children are especially in need of constructive case work, which might make it unnecessary for them to become public wards. A staff at least as large as the present one in this department should be available for preventive and protective service, without the work of child placement.

The case loads of nearly all the workers in the department of permanent care average over 100. The majority of the children under supervision are in boarding homes. The staff should have more opportunity than it can possibly have under existing circumstances to work with the entire situation, including the child's own home and his adjustment in the community. It is probable that a detailed study of the placement work of the Division would point to the desirability of uniting "temporary" and "permanent" placement work, especially for continued supervision of children. Under the present arrangement, which is necessitated by the practice of recommitment hearings at the expiration of short temporary commitments of dependent and neglected children, temporary wards are transferred to the permanent-care department if, as frequently happens, the term of commitment is changed. This problem of organization must, of course, be considered in connection with certain other radical changes that should be made, especially in the method of receiving dependent children for service or care, and in the expansion of work for the prevention of dependency and neglect.

In the fiscal year ended June 30, 1937, the Board of Public Welfare received 263 children on dependency and neglect commitments and 214 on delinquency commitments. On July 1, 1937, the Board had under care 1,866 children who had been committed to its guardianship by the juvenile court. The theory is that a child is to be placed in a foster-family home unless the institutional care that is available is better suited to his needs. For various reasons this cannot be the practice in all cases. One outstanding reason is that the staff responsible for finding and passing on the desirability of boarding and free homes comprises only two "home finders." It should be remembered that in a group as large as the number of wards of the Board there is constant need for new homes for replacements and readjustments, in addition to the work resulting from new cases. It would appear that the home-finding staff should be at least three times as large as it is at present.

Civil-service grades assigned to case workers and supervisors should be reallocated in order to make it possible to employ competent persons with training in social case work for new positions and to do justice to workers who have been long in the service. The minimum salary for a children's case worker should be \$1,800 a year, and a considerable number of the staff should be persons with special training in children's case work and psychiatric social work, who should receive salaries ranging from \$2,000 to \$2,600. The position of Director of



the Child-Welfare Division should be classified in at least grade 4 of the professional and scientific service, and other supervisory positions should be classified correspondingly. In recruiting new workers the Civil Service Commission should be requested to give special examinations, inasmuch as no other agency in Washington subject to civil service has exactly comparable functions and requirements for personnel.

In all the departments there is serious lack of clerical and stenographic service. This is especially detrimental, because it means that the already overburdened case-work staff must spend an undue amount of time and energy in writing reports that should be dictated, and it necessarily results in inadequate records. Case work and supervision are seriously handicapped by long delay in making information available.

No attempt was made in this study to go into the question of the adequacy of the medical service provided by the Board for its wards. This is a field for experts in child care and health protection. But there is an obvious deficiency in the provision for psychiatric examination of children and for social work in relation to mental condition and behavior problems. Examinations at the Gallinger Hospital are available for children considered for commitment to the District Training School, but there is constant need for examination of wards of the Board.

The District of Columbia urgently needs a public mental-hygiene clinic that can serve the schools, the courts, and the Board of Public Welfare. At present only a minimum amount of service from privately supported organizations is available to children under public supervision and care. In building up the staff of the Child-Welfare Division effort should be made to increase the number of workers that have training and experience in psychiatric social work. This background is especially important for workers who are to place and supervise delinquent children.

Another study made by the Children's Bureau has covered the question of equipment and methods of care and training in institutions under the Board of Public Welfare.<sup>22</sup> If, according to the plan suggested in the following section of the present study,<sup>23</sup> the Child-Welfare Division is equipped to provide adequate intake and adjustment service, so that children may be maintained and supervised in their own homes whenever possible, and if adequate funds and the necessary staff are made available to place children in boarding homes, these changes would undoubtedly affect the present institutional program of the Board of Public Welfare. Without these measures for preventing child dependency, neglect, and delinquency, and for making available to each child who comes under the care of the Board the kind of care and treatment he needs, the institutional program cannot be developed on a sound basis.

It is coming to be generally recognized that far too little attention has been given to child-welfare problems in families receiving relief and family service, largely because the pressure of the relief work is such that workers, even if they were trained to see and deal with special problems of the individual child, do not have time to do so;

<sup>22</sup> Public Institutions for Delinquent Children in the District of Columbia, by Ruth Bloodgood. U. S. Children's Bureau, Washington, 1937. 141 pp. (Mimeographed.)

<sup>23</sup> See the section on Intake and Adjustment Work of the Child-Welfare Division, p. 31.

this is certainly true in the District of Columbia. Every family relief and service worker should have training and experience in dealing with child-welfare problems, and every child-welfare worker should have training and experience in family relief and service. Until this ideal becomes a fact some form of practical cooperation on problems requiring special skill needs to be worked out.

Unfortunately comparatively few family-service workers have the specialized training required for these problems, even if they had time to give the necessary attention to them. This has been true even in some of the best-equipped private family agencies. The consequence is that child-welfare problems grow up in relief families right under the eyes of the workers. It has frequently been said that every family agency should have on its staff at least a consultant on child-welfare problems whose experience would be at the service of the other workers.

There is, of course, also the problem of the occasional need for temporary care away from their own homes of children in families on relief (and in other families) when the mother must go to a hospital or during some other temporary emergency. This form of service, again, requires extension of authority and staff in the Child-Welfare Division. Provision of housekeeper service to families that would otherwise be scattered during an emergency is another type of service that might profit by the coordination of the departments concerned; for example, the housekeeper service might be supplied by the Division of Public Assistance and used on occasion by the Child-Welfare Division, or vice versa.

In order to make the work for children more effective there is need for some reorganization of the Child-Welfare Division. The present division of child-placing activities into those dealing with "temporary" and those dealing with "permanent" wards is illogical and is likely to be detrimental to children who are changed from the first to the second category and are transferred, in consequence, to another supervisor. In the interest of continuity of work for the children who come into the care of the Division, the child-placing activities should be unified. When reorganization becomes practicable, consideration should be given to the desirability of setting up in the Child-Welfare Division a department with a staff especially equipped to do constructive work with delinquent children received from the court informally or by commitment.

## INTAKE AND ADJUSTMENT WORK OF THE CHILD- WELFARE DIVISION

### Court Commitment of Dependent and Neglected Children

From the earliest years the Board of Children's Guardians emphasized the undesirability of paying for maintenance from public funds unless there had been court action committing the children to the guardianship of the Board. Amos G. Warner, the first Superintendent of Charities in the District of Columbia, in a letter to the Commissioners of the District in February 1892, explaining the purposes of the bill he had prepared authorizing the establishment of the Board of Children's Guardians, pointed out the undesirability of the existing system of public subsidies to private institutions that claimed public funds "in a general way" on the basis of the number of children cared for. He held that if public aid is given, there should be some control of intake policies and adequate investigation of destitution of children for whom the public was asked to furnish maintenance. He defined "public work" as follows, in distinction to "private or church work":

By public work I mean the care of children who are absolutely destitute and properly chargeable to the District, for whom no relative, or friend, or church, or private charitable association is willing to provide, and for whom the District taxpayers can therefore properly be asked to provide, both as a matter of humanity and as a defense against the propagation of pauperism.<sup>24</sup>

A joint congressional committee of 1896 reported that—

The duty of the Government toward dependent children being established, the Government itself should determine what children are to be classed as objects of its care in the various aspects in which that care is to be given. No children should be regarded as dependent without careful and authoritative determination of the question of their status, which determination is impracticable in its most adequate sense without recourse to judicial inquiry and decision. The courts alone have power to elicit that full information which is requisite to a proper determination of the status of the citizen. In all cases, therefore, in which the dependency of the children is in question, the question should be determined by the courts.<sup>25</sup>

When the Board of Children's Guardians began its activities in 1893, dependent children in the District were being cared for only by private institutions, many of which were granted lump-sum subsidies by Congress. The Board was created mainly in order to provide care for dependent children in foster-family homes. The direct appropriations to child-caring institutions were reduced by 40 percent, and the funds so withheld from them were placed at the disposal of the Board of Public Guardians. A letter was sent to the institutions suggesting that they might apply to the courts to have the Board declared the legal guardian of any children for whose support they wished to transfer responsibility. From the beginning the plan was to compensate

<sup>24</sup> Letter from Amos G. Warner to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, Feb. 9, 1892. See Child Dependency in the District of Columbia, by Emma O. Lundberg and Mary E. Milburn, p. 119, U. S. Children's Bureau Publication No. 140. Washington, 1924.

<sup>25</sup> Joint Select Committee to Investigate the Charities and Reformatory Institutions in the District of Columbia, Part I, p. 92. 55th Cong., 1st sess., S. Docs., vol. 8, Doc. 185. Washington, 1898.



institutions for the care of children for whom the District of Columbia was properly chargeable. Efforts to discontinue subsidies to institutions and to pay for care on a per-capita basis were unsuccessful until a few years ago.

The reasons for insisting upon court commitment of children who were to be supported at public expense are indicated in the foregoing excerpts. The emphasis upon this phase of the care of dependent children appears to have overshadowed another feature of the developing program of child care. Under the law creating the Board of Children's Guardians, children received temporarily may not be kept longer than 1 week except by order of the juvenile court.<sup>26</sup> This section was construed to mean that under the authority of the court children might be given temporary care for any length of time. Thus there grew up a constantly increasing use of temporary care and the custom of recommitting children for short periods.

It is indicative of the slow progress in methods of dealing with social problems that for over 30 years court action remained the only method by which dependent children could receive care at public expense in the District of Columbia. In 1926 the Home-Care Act provided that aid could be given to dependent children in their own homes by a division of the Board of Public Welfare, but temporary aid away from their homes is still a matter for court action.

Although the pauper's oath is still required in some parts of the country for obtaining poor relief, it is usually taken for granted that aid to dependent families should be provided from public funds without formalities other than social investigation of needs and resources. But in the District of Columbia and in many other localities provision for care of children away from their own homes is still, by force of habit, decided by the court with the object of protecting public funds, instead of by a social agency with the object of providing for the needs of the children.

One source of confusion in the District is the failure of the present law to make a distinction between children who are dependent and those who are neglected. In general, children of both classes are committed as "destitute of a suitable home." In cases in which there is culpable neglect or mistreatment by parents, or in which it is desirable for the welfare of the child that guardianship shall be changed, there should, of course, be judicial action. The public child-caring agency has been active long enough and its relationship to private institutions and agencies has been well enough established so that it could safely be allowed to provide care for dependent children, especially in so-called temporary cases, in the same way that the Board of Public Welfare now provides through its other Divisions aid to children in their own homes and to families receiving relief from public funds.

Within the past few years various commissions and committees in the District have made recommendations on this subject, and a proposal is under consideration<sup>27</sup> for a bill authorizing the Board of Public Welfare to provide for the care of dependent children without court commitment and assumption of guardianship, unless judicial action is needed for change of custody. Enactment of such a measure, accompanied by appropriation of adequate funds for constructive service, would enable the Child-Welfare Division of the Board to

<sup>26</sup> 27 Stat. 269; D. C. Code, title 8, sec. 17.

<sup>27</sup> June 1937.



reconstruct its activities along lines that are now held to be essential to protective and child-caring activities, whether under public or private auspices.

### Investigation and Intake Work of the Child-Welfare Division

#### *Method of handling complaints of dependency and neglect.*

Through an arrangement between the juvenile court and the Child-Welfare Division petitions for commitment of dependent or neglected children are brought before the court by the Division, preliminary investigation having been made by the Division. This is not, however, an invariable rule. Petitions in behalf of children alleged to be neglected or "destitute of a suitable home" are also filed in the court by the Woman's Bureau, social-welfare agencies, and probation officers, in addition to the Child-Welfare Division. Unless the disposition is dismissal, continuance subject to call, or, in rare instances, probation, the children are committed to the Board of Public Welfare for care by the Child-Welfare Division.

The Child-Welfare Division receives and investigates applications for commitment of feeble-minded children and adults to the District Training School but has no further responsibility for these cases.

Dependency and neglect cases that come to the attention of the Child-Welfare Division before commitment by the court are referred to the Division by other public or private organizations or by parents or other relatives or individuals. When complaints or requests for information or advice are received by the Division, the circumstances of the case are heard and recorded by a complaint clerk. Many of the complaints or inquiries are taken care of by advice or information, referral to another agency, or correspondence with officials or agencies. Complaints of a serious nature are referred for "field service." The law prohibits payment for the maintenance of children for a period longer than 7 days without court commitment. Therefore, when investigation indicates the need of caring for children away from their own homes, a petition is filed in the juvenile court, and the children may be committed to the Board of Public Welfare for temporary or permanent care.

In order to obtain a picture of the complaints dealt with by the Child-Welfare Division, the study was divided into two parts: (1) Cases in which advice, information, or referral service only was given; (2) cases in which field service was given. It is recognized that the 2 months <sup>28</sup> selected for this analysis may not be entirely representative of the activities of the investigation department over a long period, but the following data are presented because of the light they throw on the types of problems that come to the Child-Welfare Division under the present arrangement. They illustrate the need for expansion of case-work service without direct relation to possible commitment.

#### *Advice and referral.*

During the 2 months a total of 56 "advice and referral" cases, involving 102 children, were recorded. There were also two cases of mentally deficient adults, who were referred for commitment to the

<sup>28</sup> April and May 1935.

District Training School. Of the cases involving children, 28 families (with 43 children) were white and 28 (with 59 children) were colored. The sources of the complaints or inquiries that resulted in advice or referral service are shown below:

<i>Source of complaint or inquiry</i>	<i>Number of cases</i>
Total cases-----	56
Parent-----	14
Foster parent or caretaker-----	5
Relative-----	8
Neighbor, friend, or other person-----	11
Public agencies:	
Public-Assistance Division of the Board of Public Welfare-----	1
Woman's Bureau-----	2
Other police officers-----	2
Gallinger Hospital-----	2
Bureau of Rehabilitation-----	1
Health Department-----	1
St. Ann's Infant Asylum-----	1
Out-of-town inquiries-----	8

The problems in the 56 cases included neglect or nonsupport, dependency, domestic difficulties, need for housekeepers, permanent or temporary care for children, mental defect, behavior difficulties, and out-of-town requests for information. The department gave minor service, advice, and information, or referred cases to the Public-Assistance Division of the Board of Public Welfare and to other agencies equipped to deal with the problems reported.

### *Field service.*

Field-service cases are defined as cases necessitating a call and probably case work by the Child-Welfare Division. They include cases of feeble-minded children and adults investigated for admission to the District Training School, but for the purpose of this discussion the following data pertain only to dependency and neglect cases. The cases of feeble-minded children will be dealt with separately. During the 2 months 78 cases, involving 137 children presumably dependent or neglected, were accepted for field service. The sources of complaints in cases accepted for field service by the Child-Welfare Division are shown below:

<i>Source of complaint</i>	<i>Number of cases</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
Total-----	78	137
Parent-----	5	10
Foster parent or caretaker-----	2	2
Relative-----	3	4
Neighbor, friend, or other person-----	3	14
Public agencies:		
Public-Assistance Division of the Board of Public Welfare-----	17	38
Juvenile court-----	10	12
District Training School-----	9	9
Woman's Bureau-----	3	3
Gallinger Hospital-----	2	4
School-attendance office-----	2	3
Transient Bureau-----	1	1
Private agencies-----	6	12
Anonymous-----	1	1
Out-of-town inquiries-----	14	24

The private agencies referring cases during the period studied included: Instructive Visiting Nurse Association, Council of Social

Agencies, Hillcrest, Jewish Social Service Association, and the Juvenile Protective Association.

Analysis of the problems shows that 30 of the complaints alleged neglect and nonsupport; 27 were classified as dependency; and 7 were complaints of behavior. Dependency cases included 17 children of unmarried mothers, 9 of whom were referred by the District Training School for the feeble-minded.

Out-of-town inquiries or requests for assistance related to placement of children in the District of Columbia, nonsupport by relatives residing in the District, and determination of legal residence.

The problems involved in cases accepted for field service by the Child-Welfare Division were as follows:

<i>Problem involved</i>	<i>Number of cases</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
Total cases-----	78	137
Neglect and nonsupport-----	30	70
Dependency:		
Unmarried mother-----	17	17
All other cases-----	10	19
Behavior-----	7	7
Out-of-town inquiry-----	14	24

Of the 137 children accepted by the Child-Welfare Division for field service, 24 were living with both parents; 30 were with the mother; and 12 were with the father. Relatives or friends were caring for 41, and 23 were in foster homes or institutions. Whereabouts was not recorded for 7 children.

Excluding out-of-town inquiries, an average of about 50 children a month come to the attention of the Child-Welfare Division through complaints that appear to be serious enough to require investigation and adjustment service. It may be assumed that most of these cases are referred to the Child-Welfare Division on the assumption that the children need to be under the care of the public agency. One can only conjecture as to the number of such cases that would be brought to the Division if it were not known that the only way the Division can assume care of children is through court commitment.

In most of the cases it was decided after investigation that the children were not proper wards of the Board of Public Welfare. In the course of the inquiries many adjustments were made by referring children to other child-welfare or family-relief agencies, or by persuading parents and other relatives to face the responsibility of providing maintenance. It is not possible for the small staff of the Child-Welfare Division to keep in touch with conditions in the homes of children brought to its attention but not accepted for care and to make sure that the children are not being neglected.

#### *Investigation for admission to the District Training School.*

The cases of feeble-minded children and adults included in the field-service records were segregated from the foregoing data because this group involves a distinct problem. During the 2 months covered by the study of intake, 14 cases, involving 10 children and 4 adults, were referred to the Child-Welfare Division for investigation to determine admission to the District Training School. Four children and two adults were white; six children and two adults were colored.

The whole question of intake service for the District Training School and the extra-institutional supervision of the feeble-minded



should be given careful consideration. The limitations of the present study did not permit more than a very brief inquiry into existing conditions. It is undoubtedly desirable that investigation for admission to the institution shall be made by the Board of Public Welfare, but it seems illogical to assign this activity to the Child-Welfare Division without providing special staff for the work.

### Dependent and Neglected Children Before the Juvenile Court

#### *Sources of petitions.*

Investigation of home conditions and in some cases a period of care by family-welfare or child-welfare agencies have usually preceded the filing of petitions in the juvenile court in behalf of dependent and neglected children, referred to as D. S. H. cases (destitute of a suitable home), and agencies bring to the attention of the court only children whom they believe to be in need of removal from their homes or for whom proper provision cannot be made by their natural guardians.

The sources of petitions to the juvenile court in dependency and neglect cases that resulted in commitment of children to the Board of Public Welfare are shown in table 1 for the 7 fiscal years 1931 through 1937. It is seen that the cases in which the Child-Welfare Division filed the petition ranged from 22 percent in 1931 to 63 percent in 1935, with almost half the total number originating with the Child-Welfare Division in the year ended June 30, 1937. It has been shown in the preceding section that the Child-Welfare Division also receives complaints from public and private organizations and individuals, which after investigation may result in a petition's being entered by the Division. The table shows a decided decrease in petitions received by the court from individuals, including parents and other relatives; presumably these cases are now being directed to the Child-Welfare Division.

TABLE 1.—*Source of petition in dependency and neglect cases of children committed to the Board of Public Welfare; years ended June 30, 1931-37*

Year ended June 30	Children committed because of dependency and neglect								
	Total	Source of petition							
		Child-Welfare Division		Juvenile-court probation officers	Private child-caring agencies	Wo-man's Bureau	Police	School attendance officer	Individ-uals
		Number	Percent						
1931.....	241	52	22	22	21	43	10	31	62
1932.....	277	117	42	35	8	37	7	11	62
1933.....	242	92	38	37	21	52	8	1	31
1934.....	192	69	36	20	32	40	6	8	17
1935.....	241	152	63	10	12	42	5	6	14
1936.....	216	106	49	30	24	46	2	1	7
1937.....	263	124	47	45	21	71	2	0	0

#### *Types of commitment.*

Of the 263 children committed to the Board of Public Welfare in the fiscal year ended June 30, 1937, because of dependency or neglect, 29 were committed permanently and 234 were originally committed temporarily. As will be shown in the following pages, temporary com-



mitment has little relation to the length of time the child eventually remains under the guardianship of the Board, even in temporary cases that are not later made permanent. It may be presumed the children committed for permanent care are those who have been deprived of parents, or those whom it is desirable to remove from the legal custody of their natural guardians.

*Rehearing of temporary commitments.*

At the expiration of the period of commitment, children who are temporary wards of the Board of Public Welfare are brought before the court for rehearing and disposition. Data on these cases were obtained for 2 months.<sup>29</sup>

Fifty-three children were involved in the 33 cases called for rehearing during the period. In 19 cases, involving 34 children, there had been from 2 to 7 previous commitments to the Board of Public Welfare. In 14 cases, involving 19 children, there had been 1 temporary commitment before the rehearing in the 2 months.

In order to understand the meaning of temporary commitments, an analysis should be made of the histories of children who have been under temporary commitments during the whole time they were wards of the Board of Public Welfare. In the "active" group—53 children whose commitments were reconsidered during the 2 months—many had been under care only a short time, but 31 had been wards of the Board from 2 to 6 years prior to the rehearings, which in most cases resulted in further temporary commitment. The total time covered by temporary commitments, including the last one, is shown below:

<i>Total time for which child was committed to Board of Public Welfare</i>		<i>Number of children</i>
Total	-----	53
Less than 6 months	-----	3
6 months, less than 1 year	-----	1
1 year, less than 2 years	-----	15
2 years, less than 3 years	-----	8
3 years, less than 4 years	-----	7
4 years, less than 5 years	-----	10
5 years, less than 6 years	-----	4
6 years	-----	2
8 years	-----	3

Details are given on page 38 for each dependency and neglect case under supervision of the Board of Public Welfare that was in court for rehearing in the 2 months.

<sup>29</sup> April and May 1935.

## White children

Case	Number of children	Date of first commitment to Board	Number of commitments to Board	Total length of temporary commitments		Length of each commitment to Board of Public Welfare						Type of last commitment
						1	2	3	4	5	6	
				Yrs.	Mos.							
1	2	4-20-30	6	6	---	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	Temporary.
2	1	10- 3-30	6	5	6	6 mos.	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	Do.
3	3	4-15-31	4	4	---	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	---	---	Do.
4	3	5- 6-31	6	5	6	6 mos.	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	Do.
5	1	2-12-35	3	2	---	3 mos.	3 wks.	2 wks.	---	---	---	Do.
6	2	10-21-31	6	4	6	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	6 mos.	6 mos.	6 mos.	Do.
7	2	10-21-31	6	4	5	1 mo.	4 mos.	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	Do.
8	3	11- 4-31	6	3	7	1 yr.	6 mos.	1 yr.	1 mo.	1 yr.	1 16 yrs.	Minority.
9	2	4-20-32	4	3	---	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 20 yrs.	---	---	Do.
10	3	5- 4-32	4	4	---	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	---	---	Temporary.
11	1	9-20-33	4	1	8	1 yr.	1 mo.	7 mos.	1 8 yrs.	---	---	Minority.
12	1	1- 4-33	4	1	6	6 mos.	6 mos.	6 mos.	1 9 yrs.	---	---	Do.
13	1	5-16-34	2	2	---	1 yr.	1 yr.	---	---	---	---	Temporary.
14	1	4-28-34	2	1	6	1 yr.	6 mos.	---	---	---	---	Do.
15	2	5-16-34	2	1	6	1 yr.	6 mos.	---	---	---	---	Do.
16	1	7-18-34	2	2	9	3 mos.	6 mos.	---	---	---	---	(2).
17	4	10-17-34	2	1	6	6 mos.	1 yr.	---	---	---	---	Temporary.
18	1	3-27-35	2	---	4	2 mos.	2 mos.	---	---	---	---	Do.

<sup>1</sup> Minimum.<sup>2</sup> One additional court hearing, resulting in dismissal of case.

## Colored children

Case	Number of children	Date of first commitment to Board	Number of commitments to Board	Total length of temporary commitments		Length of each commitment to Board of Public Welfare								Type of last commitment
						1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
				Yrs.	Mos.									
1	3	5-18-28	8	8	---	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	(1).
2	1	1-30-34	4	1	5	6 mos.	6 mos.	3 mos.	2 mos.	---	---	---	---	Temporary.
3	1	4-27-32	2	3	---	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	---	---	---	---	---	(2).
4	1	5-21-33	2	2	---	1 yr.	1 yr.	---	---	---	---	---	---	(3).
5	2	5-17-33	3	2	---	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 14 yrs.	---	---	---	---	---	Minority.
6	1	5- 9-23	3	3	---	1 yr.	1 yr.	1 yr.	---	---	---	---	---	Temporary.
7	1	1-10-34	2	1	3	3 mos.	1 yr.	---	---	---	---	---	---	(2).
8	1	1-31-34	3	2	3	3 mos.	1 yr.	1 yr.	---	---	---	---	---	Temporary.
9	1	4-25-34	3	2	6	6 mos.	1 yr.	1 yr.	---	---	---	---	---	Do.
10	1	5- 2-34	2	2	---	1 yr.	1 yr.	---	---	---	---	---	---	Do.
11	1	4-11-34	2	1	---	1 yr.	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	(2).
12	1	5- 9-34	2	2	---	1 yr.	1 yr.	---	---	---	---	---	---	Temporary.
13	1	5-22-34	2	1	---	1 yr.	---	1 5 yrs.	---	---	---	---	---	Minority.
14	2	4-12-34	2	1	---	1 yr.	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	(2).
15	1	3-27-35	2	---	4	2 mos.	2 mos.	---	---	---	---	---	---	Temporary.

<sup>1</sup> The case of one child was dismissed; the other two children were committed temporarily.<sup>2</sup> One additional court hearing, resulting in dismissal of case.<sup>3</sup> Committed to District Training School.<sup>4</sup> Minimum.

An important consideration in connection with the present procedure in recommitting temporary wards is the time consumed by these court hearings. A record was kept of the time that case workers and the supervisor of the department of investigation and temporary care spent at the regular Wednesday sessions of the juvenile court in waiting for and in attending hearings at the expiration of temporary commitments in dependency and neglect cases only. During the 2 months in which a record was kept, the total time spent in court by

these workers was 77 hours each month. Thus the total time consumed in attending recommitment hearings each month was equal to 11 working days of one staff member.

The practice of making temporary commitments to the Board of Public Welfare should be considered with due regard to its historical and legal background. It cannot be explained or condoned on any grounds other than legal limitations of social procedure. It is an undesirable way of dealing with dependency and neglect cases, but until certain legal restrictions are removed and ingrained practices are abandoned, the juvenile court appears to have no alternative to this wasteful method of dealing with children who must have the care and protection of the public child-caring agency.

Classification of cases as permanent and temporary, and temporary commitment for definite periods of time, usually 1 year or 6 months, imply a finality that should not exist in the treatment of social problems. The length of care should be determined by the results of case work with the child and with his family. Changing home conditions cannot be regulated on a time-clock basis. If dependency and neglect cases that do not involve removal of children from the legal custody of parents are to continue to be subject to court commitment, the court should be empowered to make commitments to the Board of Public Welfare without setting a definite term or requiring the cases to be heard again at the expiration of each temporary commitment.

### **Delinquent Children Committed to the Board of Public Welfare**

The law provides that the juvenile court may commit delinquent children to the National Training Schools or to the Board of Public Welfare. As in cases of dependent and neglected children, the Board assumes legal guardianship of children committed as delinquent, and they are cared for by the Child-Welfare Division. They may be placed in boarding or other foster homes, in private institutions where their board is paid, or in the two Industrial Home Schools maintained by the Board of Public Welfare.

Of the 1,846 children who were wards of the Board of Public Welfare on October 1, 1937, 252 had been committed because of delinquency. Children so committed included 40 white boys, 132 colored boys, 18 white girls, and 62 colored girls. Ten percent of the delinquent children as compared with 53 percent of the dependent children were being maintained in boarding homes, and 48 percent of the delinquent children as compared with 11 percent of the dependent children were in the two Industrial Home Schools on the given date.<sup>30</sup>

During the 6 months, July to December 1936, 94 delinquent children were committed to the Board of Public Welfare; 21 were committed for the period of minority, and 73 were committed for temporary periods. The charges on which these children were committed were as follows: Truancy, 9; incorrigibility, 23; taking property of another, 42; unlawful entry, 6; destroying private property, 2; discharging firearms, 1; indecent exposure, 1; violation of probation, 10.

In the past the care of delinquent children by the Child-Welfare Division involved many problems. During the past 2 years the juvenile court has become better equipped to do constructive case work through its probation staff, and as a result many serious diffi-

<sup>30</sup> See the section on Dependent and Delinquent Wards of the Board of Public Welfare, p. 42.



culties between the court and the Board have been overcome. The situation is still complicated by the limitations that the archaic law imposes upon the court. Not until the law is modernized can logical treatment be given to children who come before the court because of offenses against laws and regulations.

The study of records in the court and in the Child-Welfare Division brought to light many questionable practices that affected the children under care of the Board. For example, it was formerly a common practice of the court to commit children to the Board "for investigation." Obviously the reason for this was that the court was too understaffed to make a study of each case before it seemed necessary to make some disposition of the child. Commitment for investigation by a Board that was also understaffed would seem to be a wasteful method, especially in cases where study might have disclosed the possibility of giving the child adequate care and supervision without committing him to the public agency. The greater use of institution placement for delinquent children is in large measure attributable to the fact that the Board received many children for whom it had no social and personality information, such as is necessary for intelligent placement. Boarding-home placement cannot be used so extensively as it should be for children with behavior problems because the staff of the Child-Welfare Division is overloaded and these cases demand especially careful placement and supervision.<sup>31</sup>

The juvenile court has continually improved the quality of its investigation and probation service during the past 2 or 3 years and is overcoming many of the problems that have complicated the work of the Child-Welfare Division. Commitment policies and problems of relationship between the two agencies are now being worked out on a cooperative basis, and difficulties are being overcome. An evidence of the trend is that of the 94 children committed to the Board because of delinquency during the last 6 months of 1936, 55 (including 10 for whom the charge was "violation of probation") were on probation at the time of the last offense and had thus had the benefit of social service from the court. The practice for some months has been to continue cases for investigation by the probation staff instead of committing children to the Board for investigation.

The question of the responsibility of the court and of the Child-Welfare Division for children committed to the Board for temporary periods appears still to be a problem. Among the points that need definition are the following: Does commitment of a delinquent child to the Board imply that it is the intention of the court that the child shall be removed from his home for the period of the commitment; or may the Board at its discretion leave the child in his own home, doing the necessary case work with the family and the child? To what extent is it the policy of the court to specify the type of care or the institution in which a child is to be placed? Is the Board solely responsible for contact with the child and the family while he is under the care or supervision of the Board, or does the probation officer also deal with the child and the family? Does the relationship of the Board to the child and the family in cases of permanent commitment differ from that in temporary commitments? Does the Board have power to discharge from care and supervision a child committed to it because of delinquency, in temporary as well as in permanent commitments?

<sup>31</sup> See pp. 25-27 for case loads of staff.



The care and supervision of delinquent children by the public agency cannot be planned and carried on successfully until certain technical and practical questions have been worked out between the court and the Child-Welfare Division. There has been much improvement in the standards of the court's work, and many of the inadequacies of its social service have been eliminated. The probation staff is giving increasingly better service, but it still needs more workers.

The task of dealing constructively with the delinquency problem cannot be accomplished until the Child-Welfare Division has an adequate staff and increased funds for boarding-home care, and no fundamental change can be made in the Board's method of handling delinquency cases until there is such provision. When it becomes practicable to do so, consideration may well be given by the Board of Public Welfare to the desirability of establishing in the Child-Welfare Division a special department adequately equipped to deal with delinquency problems coming to the attention of the Division either through referral by the court or through commitment. The court should be legally empowered, if it does not already have this power, to refer cases informally to the Child-Welfare Division for investigation and case work, and to receive from the public agency, as well as from private organizations, such assistance as a social agency should be in a position to give in the interest of prevention and control of delinquency. Emphasis should also be given to the need in the District of Columbia for adequate psychological and psychiatric service, without which it is impossible to deal intelligently with children who get into difficulties or who have wayward tendencies.

It may well be that an expert in the field of juvenile delinquency should be appointed with the rank of Assistant Director of the Board of Public Welfare for the purpose of giving general guidance in the coordination of the case work and institutional activities of the Board in the care of its delinquent wards. The Board could thus, in conjunction with the juvenile court, give leadership in the development of a broad program of public treatment of juvenile delinquency.

## DEPENDENT AND DELINQUENT WARDS OF THE BOARD OF PUBLIC WELFARE

### Number of Children and Care Provided

On July 1, 1937, a total of 1,866 children who had been committed by the juvenile court because of dependency, neglect, or delinquency were wards of the Board of Public Welfare of the District of Columbia. There have been variations in racial distribution and commitment classification, as well as in the types of disposition during different periods of time, but there has been no significant change in the total number of public wards. Index numbers for children under care of the Board of Public Welfare on July 1 of each year from 1915 to 1937, with 1915 as the base, show the unvarying burden of child care and training borne by the public agencies of the District of Columbia (table 2).

TABLE 2.—*Number of children under care of the Board of Public Welfare on July 1 of each year, and index numbers, with 1915 as the base; 1915-37*

Year	Number of children under care	Index num- bers (with 1915 as the base)
1915 .....	1,860	100
1916 .....	1,928	104
1917 .....	1,997	107
1918 .....	2,053	110
1919 .....	2,026	109
1920 .....	1,988	107
1921 .....	1,796	97
1922 .....	1,809	97
1923 .....	1,556	84
1924 .....	1,508	81
1925 .....	1,597	86
1926 .....	1,693	91
1927 .....	1,612	87
1928 .....	1,764	95
1929 .....	1,785	96
1930 .....	1,758	95
1931 .....	1,737	93
1932 .....	1,839	99
1933 .....	1,822	98
1934 .....	1,760	95
1935 .....	1,768	95
1936 .....	1,775	95
1937 .....	1,866	100

Children become wards of the Board of Public Welfare only through commitment by the juvenile court.<sup>32</sup> Dependent or neglected children are received by the Board either for minority or on temporary com-

<sup>32</sup> The National Training Schools receive commitments directly from the juvenile court. All other commitments of dependent, neglected, and delinquent children are made to the Board of Public Welfare, which, through its Child-Welfare Division, places the children in family homes, in the two Industrial Home Schools under its jurisdiction, or in other institutions.

mitment. Delinquent children are usually received on temporary commitment, but in some cases when the children are near the age limit of the court's jurisdiction a "straight commitment" places them in the Board's custody for the remaining time. At the expiration of temporary commitments the children are again brought before the court for disposition.

Of the 1,846 children who were wards of the Board of Public Welfare on October 1, 1937, 1,594 were committed as dependent and neglected and 252 as delinquent. These children included 819 white children and 1,027 colored children. (Detailed figures on race and types of care provided for children committed because of dependency and neglect and because of delinquency are given in appendix tables I and II, pp. 80-81, for the first day of each month, January to October 1937.)

### Wards of the Board of Public Welfare

A detailed analysis was made of data supplied by the Child-Welfare Division for children under care on November 1, 1936, which is discussed in the following pages.

#### *Sex, race, and reason for commitment.*

The Child-Welfare Division of the Board of Public Welfare had under care on November 1, 1936, a total of 1,778 children who had been committed to the Board by the juvenile court (table 3). This total comprised 1,007 boys and 771 girls. Forty-four percent (781 children) were white; 56 percent (997 children) were colored.

Of the children under care on the given date, 83 percent had been committed because of dependency or neglect and 17 percent because of delinquency. There is a striking difference in the racial distribution in the two groups. Forty-eight percent of the dependent children were white and 52 percent were colored. In the group committed because of delinquency, on the other hand, 23 percent were white and 77 percent were colored.

Case studies would be required in order to determine the reasons for the disproportionately large number of colored children committed to the Board as delinquent (table 3). The number of dependent and neglected colored children made public wards is explained in large part by the small number of private agencies and institutions caring for these children.

Undoubtedly the large number of commitments of colored children of both classifications may be attributed to the greater economic insecurity of the colored population in general and to the prevalence of poor housing and family instability among colored people. It would be desirable to know whether the supervision of colored children in their own homes instead of commitment to institutions is impracticable in the District to the extent indicated by the figures for the delinquent group and whether the number of commitments could be reduced if adequate case-work service were available.

TABLE 3.—Reason for commitment of white and colored boys and girls under care of the Board of Public Welfare on Nov. 1, 1936

Sex and color of child	Children under care				
	Total	Reason for commitment			
		Dependency or neglect		Delinquency	
		Number	Percent distribution	Number	Percent distribution
Total.....	1, 778	1, 474	100	304	100
Boys:					
White.....	446	399	27	47	15
Colored.....	561	393	27	168	55
Girls:					
White.....	335	313	21	22	7
Colored.....	436	369	25	67	22

*Temporary and permanent commitments.*

One-third of the children under care on the given date were temporary wards of the Board, and two-thirds had been committed during minority (table 4). Of the dependent wards 72 percent were on minority commitments, and of those committed for delinquency 42 percent were on minority commitments.<sup>33</sup>

Recommitments for minority change the status of many of the temporary wards to permanent, and through successive temporary recommitments a considerable number of the so-called temporary wards remain under care for several years. Children originally committed because of delinquency are sometimes recommitted as "destitute of a suitable home", becoming permanent wards. Therefore neither the cross-section data on children under care on a given date nor those relating to monthly commitments furnish reliable evidence in regard to the "temporary" or "permanent" status of the children who become wards of the Board.

TABLE 4.—Type of commitment and reason for commitment of white and colored children under care of the Board of Public Welfare on Nov. 1, 1936

Color of child and reason for commitment	Children under care				
	Total	Type of commitment			
		Number		Percent	
		Temporary	Permanent	Temporary	Permanent
Total.....	1, 778	597	1, 181	34	66
White.....	781	280	501	36	64
Colored.....	997	317	680	32	68
Dependency or neglect:					
White.....	712	244	468	34	66
Colored.....	762	176	586	23	77
Delinquency:					
White.....	69	36	33	52	48
Colored.....	235	141	94	60	40

<sup>33</sup> If these figures are compared with those given in the section relating to current commitments, it must be remembered that the wards of the Board on a given date include children who were received as temporary wards and later recommitted for minority, and that the proportionate number of "permanent" wards under care at any time is necessarily larger than the proportionate number of such commitments made within a certain period.



The inability of the Child-Welfare Division, because of lack of funds and staff, to do constructive case work with children and families before children are committed or after children have become wards of the Board results in much needless removal of children from their own homes. No amount of case work with the families can make it desirable for some children to remain in the custody of their parents or other relatives. But from the financial as well as from the social point of view, public interest demands the elimination of child dependency, insofar as it is possible, by means of constructive service to families, support for children in their own homes, and the enforcement of parental obligations.

### *Types of care.*

Of the 1,778 children who were wards of the Board of Public Welfare on November 1, 1936, 67 percent were cared for in foster-family homes, and 5 percent were in their parental homes. Seventeen percent were in institutions under the jurisdiction of the Board. Four percent were in child-caring institutions conducted under private auspices. Three percent were in other places, one-third of them enrolled in the Civilian Conservation Corps, and the remainder in hospitals, schools, the United States Army, and penal institutions. On the given date 4 percent of the Board's wards were "absconders", or children whose whereabouts was not known.

The types of care given children who were wards of the Board of Public Welfare on November 1, 1936, were as follows:

<i>Type of care</i>	<i>Percent distribution<sup>1</sup></i>
Total.....	100.0
Foster-family home.....	67.3
Boarding home.....	46.8
Relatives' home.....	10.2
Free.....	6.4
Board paid.....	3.8
Free home.....	6.4
Wage home or "wage board" home.....	3.2
Trial adoption home.....	.7
Parent's home.....	5.0
Institution under Board of Public Welfare.....	16.6
Industrial Home School for Colored Children.....	9.6
Industrial Home School (for white children).....	6.6
Receiving Home for Children.....	.4
Private child-caring institution.....	4.3
Board paid by Board of Public Welfare.....	3.8
Board not paid by Board of Public Welfare.....	.5
Hospital.....	.6
Other type.....	2.0
Civilian Conservation Corps.....	.8
Penal institution.....	.7
United States Army.....	.4
Nurses' training school.....	.1
"Absconders", or children whose whereabouts was not known.....	4.2

<sup>1</sup> See also appendix table III, p. 82.

*For dependent and for delinquent wards.*—Of the 1,474 children under the care of the Child-Welfare Division because of dependency and neglect, 77 percent were in foster-family homes; of the total number (1,474 children) 54 percent were in boarding homes. Foster-family care was provided for only 20 percent of the children committed to the Board because of delinquency; care in boarding homes was provided for 11 percent. Nine percent of the dependent and neglected children and 55 percent of the delinquent children were in the two Industrial Home Schools or in the Receiving Home for Children. Private institutions provided for 4 percent of the dependent and neglected children and 5 percent of the delinquent children.

The types of care given dependent and neglected wards of the Board of Public Welfare on November 1, 1936, are compared below with the types given delinquent wards:

Type of care	Dependent and neglected children	Delinquent children
	Percent distribution <sup>1</sup>	
Total.....	100.0	100.0
Foster-family home.....	77.0	20.4
Boarding home.....	54.2	10.9
Relatives' home.....	11.3	5.3
Free.....	6.8	4.6
Board paid.....	4.5	.7
Free home and trial adoption home.....	8.2	2.0
Wage home or "wage board" home.....	3.4	2.3
Parents' home.....	4.3	8.2
Institution under Board of Public Welfare.....	8.8	54.9
Industrial Home School for Colored Children.....	3.4	39.8
Industrial Home School (for white children).....	5.0	14.5
Receiving Home for Children.....	.4	.7
Private child-caring institution.....	4.2	4.6
Board paid by Board of Public Welfare.....	3.7	4.3
Board not paid by Board of Public Welfare.....	.5	.3
Hospital.....	.7	---
Other type.....	1.5	4.3
Civilian Conservation Corps.....	.7	1.0
Penal institution.....	.4	2.0
United States Army.....	.3	1.3
Nurses' training school.....	.1	---
"Absconders", or children whose whereabouts was not known...	3.5	7.6

<sup>1</sup> See also appendix table III, p. 82.

*For white and for colored children.*—Board was being paid in family homes or in private institutions for 65 percent of the dependent white children and for 60 percent of the colored children. None of the delinquent white children, but 20 percent of the delinquent colored children were boarded in family homes, with relatives, or in private institutions.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>34</sup> See appendix table III, p. 82.

Mention has been made of the small amount of care available for colored children in institutions under private auspices. Of the 1,778 wards of the Board of Public Welfare on November 1, 1936, 76 children were cared for by private child-caring institutions (table 5). Of this number 47 were white children; board was paid from public funds for 39 of them, and 8 were earning their maintenance or were cared for without expense to the public agency. Twenty-nine colored wards were in a private institution, 28 of them with board paid from public funds.

TABLE 5.—*Type of care of white and colored children under care of the Board of Public Welfare on Nov. 1, 1936*

Type of care	Children under care		
	Total	White	Colored
Total.....	1, 778	781	997
Foster-family home.....	1, 197	531	666
Boarding home.....	832	389	443
Relative's home.....	182	74	108
Free.....	114	41	73
Board paid.....	68	33	35
Free home.....	113	41	72
Wage home or "wage board" home.....	57	18	39
Trial adoption home.....	13	9	4
Parent's home.....	89	49	40
Institution under Board of Public Welfare.....	296	117	179
Industrial Home School for Colored Children.....	171		171
Industrial Home School (for white children).....	117	117	
Receiving Home for Children.....	8		8
Private child-caring institution.....	76	47	29
Board paid by Board of Public Welfare.....	67	39	28
Croome Settlement School, Croome, Md.....	28		28
St. Ann's Infant Asylum.....	8	8	
Jewish Foster Home.....	5	5	
St. Vincent's Home and School.....	7	7	
Washington Home for Foundlings.....	1	1	
St. Gertrude's School.....	2	2	
Linton Hall Military Academy, Bristow, Va.....	2	2	
St. Joseph's Home for Boys.....	6	6	
Twenty-four Hour Day School, Annapolis, Md.....	7	7	
St. Gertrude's Academy, Ridgely, Md.....	1	1	
Board not paid by Board of Public Welfare.....	9	8	1
Florence Crittenton Home.....	2	2	
Jewish Foster Home.....	1	1	
Croome Settlement School, Croome, Md.....	1		1
St. Ann's Infant Asylum.....	1	1	
Veterans of Foreign Wars Home, Eaton Rapids, Mich.....	4	4	
Hospital.....	11	4	7
Other type.....	35	11	24
Civilian Conservation Corps.....	14	1	13
Lorton Reformatory.....	11	2	9
Eastern Penitentiary, Pa.....	1		1
United States Army.....	8	7	1
Gallinger Hospital Nurses' Training School.....	1	1	
"Absconders", or children whose whereabouts was not known.....	74	22	52

On the given date 11 percent of the white boys and 13 percent of the colored boys who had been committed because of dependency and neglect were in the Industrial Home Schools. Seventy percent

of the white boys committed because of delinquency and 72 percent of the colored boys were in the Industrial Home Schools.

The Industrial Home School for Colored Children accepts only boys. Because there is no intermediate institution for delinquent colored girls they are more frequently committed by the juvenile court to the National Training School for Girls than delinquent white girls are. Moreover, on November 1, 1936, the Board of Public Welfare was paying for the care of 13 delinquent and 15 dependent or neglected colored girls in a private institution, the Croome Settlement School in Maryland.

#### *Maintenance from public funds.*

Detailed study not within the scope of the present inquiry would be necessary in order to ascertain the number of children whose maintenance was paid for entirely by the Board of Public Welfare, those supported in part by other agencies and institutions, and those for whom parents or other relatives paid all or part of the cost of care. The data given in table 6 show that 1,263 children, 71 percent of the wards for whom place of care was reported on the given date, were maintained in full or in part from public funds in boarding homes, in homes of relatives, in private institutions, or in public institutions.

TABLE 6.—*Source of maintenance and type of care of children under care of the Board of Public Welfare on Nov. 1, 1936*

Source of maintenance and type of care	Children under care	
	Number	Percent distribution
Total.....	1, 778	100. 0
Maintenance paid in full or in part by Board of Public Welfare.....	1, 263	71. 0
Boarding home.....	832	46. 8
Relatives' home.....	1 68	3. 8
Institutions under Board of Public Welfare.....	296	16. 6
Private institution.....	62	3. 5
School or academy.....	5	. 3
Maintenance not paid by Board of Public Welfare.....	441	24. 8
Free foster home.....	126	7. 1
Home of parents or other relative.....	203	11. 4
Private institution.....	6	. 3
Children self-supporting:		
Wage or "wage board" home.....	57	3. 2
Institution (not elsewhere classified).....	3	. 2
Civilian Conservation Corps.....	14	. 8
United States Army.....	8	. 4
Nurses' training school.....	1	. 1
Hospital.....	11	. 6
Penal institution.....	12	. 7
"Absconders", or children whose whereabouts was not known.....	74	4. 2

<sup>1</sup> Includes 50 children whose board was paid by means of grants of "aid to dependent children".



## PUBLIC AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN IN THEIR OWN HOMES

### Prevention of Child Dependency Through Home Care

In the preceding sections of this report much has been said about keeping dependent children in their own homes through such means as aid to needy families, investigation of needs, and case-work service to families and children. According to the United States census of dependent children approximately one-fourth of the children under the care of public and private institutions or agencies in the District of Columbia in 1933 <sup>35</sup> were children whose mothers were responsible for their maintenance because of the death or absence of the fathers. Similarly, the present study shows that one-fourth of the children who came before the juvenile court charged with delinquency were from homes in which the mother was the head of the household (p. 62).

There will always be need for institutional or foster-home care for children who have no homes or whose natural guardians are unfit to retain their custody, and many children require care away from their own homes during temporary emergencies in the families. But a considerable part of the burden of child dependency now accepted by public and private institutions and agencies could be prevented if the necessary funds were available for aid and service to dependent families.

In 1909 the first White House Conference on the Care of Dependent Children embodied in its resolutions the much-quoted statement regarding home care:

Home life is the highest and finest product of civilization. It is the great molding force of mind and character. Children should not be deprived of it except for urgent and compelling reasons. Children of parents of worthy character, suffering from temporary misfortune, and children of reasonably efficient and deserving mothers who are without the support of the normal breadwinner, should, as a rule, be kept with their parents, such aid being given as may be necessary to maintain suitable homes for the rearing of the children \* \* \* Except in unusual circumstances, the home should not be broken up for reasons of poverty, but only for considerations of inefficiency or immorality.

The first laws authorizing public aid to dependent children in their own homes were enacted in 1911. The law in Illinois was State-wide in application and the law in Missouri was at first limited to one county. In both these States the provision was designed specifically to make it possible for the juvenile court to grant aid to needy parents instead of committing dependent children to institutions at public expense. The "mothers' pension" movement spread rapidly throughout the United States. It represented in large measure a reaction against the existing poor-relief methods and a desire to assure more adequate assistance for families deprived of a father's support.

<sup>35</sup> See the section on Dependent Children Under the Care of Public and Private Agencies and Institutions, p. 66.

Although the first bill designed to provide home care for dependent children in the District of Columbia was introduced in Congress in 1916,<sup>36</sup> it was not until 1926 that the District of Columbia was enabled to provide public funds for the care of dependent children in their own homes. During the intervening 10 years, "mothers' pension" bills were introduced in the House of Representatives eight times and in the Senate eight times before a measure substantially in the form proposed by the Commission on Child-Welfare Laws was enacted in June 1926, and an appropriation was made by Congress for this purpose. This act is usually called the Home-Care Act.

### Aid Under the Home-Care Act of the District of Columbia

#### *Families aided and annual expenditures.*

The Division of Home Care of the Board of Public Welfare began its work in October 1926, and the first allowances to families were effective November 1, 1926. On June 30, 1927, 102 families were receiving assistance toward the maintenance of 362 children (table 7). At the end of the fiscal year ended June 30, 1935, 211 families with 712 children were beneficiaries.

Appropriations to the Division of Home Care have ranged from \$74,500 for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1928, to \$160,000 made available for each of the 2 fiscal years ended June 30, 1934, and June 30, 1935. Expenditures were only 59 percent higher in 1935 than in 1929, when the act had been in operation only 2 years.

TABLE 7.—*Appropriations<sup>1</sup> and expenditures each year under the Home-Care Act for care of dependent white and colored children in their own homes and number of families on allowance and number of children eligible for aid in these families on last day of year: years ended June 30, 1927-35*

Year ended June 30	Appropriation <sup>1</sup>	Expenditures	Index number of ex- penditures (with 1929 as the base)	Number of families on allowance, June 30			Index number of fam- ilies (with 1929 as the base)	Number of children in families on allowance, June 30		
				Total	White	Colored		Total	White	Colored
1927.....	\$75,000	\$41,186	-----	102	58	44	-----	362	196	166
1928.....	74,500	<sup>2</sup> 89,672	-----	124	80	44	-----	434	265	169
1929.....	112,820	100,452	100	135	87	48	100	473	279	194
1930.....	119,920	110,378	110	142	80	62	105	516	263	253
1931.....	<sup>3</sup> 124,920	124,906	124	161	87	74	119	595	292	303
1932.....	140,000	139,323	139	176	93	83	130	640	295	345
1933.....	150,000	143,687	143	206	106	100	153	719	332	387
1934.....	160,000	141,437	141	194	92	102	144	669	284	385
1935.....	160,000	159,280	159	211	99	112	156	712	314	398

<sup>1</sup> Exclusive of appropriations for administrative purposes.

<sup>2</sup> The Board of Public Welfare was authorized to use the unexpended balance from the preceding year's appropriation.

<sup>3</sup> Includes a deficiency appropriation of \$5,000 granted during the year.

The implications of the data on expenditures and on families given aid each year appear to be that sufficient effort was not made to extend home care to a larger number of families in need of such assistance. It is true that increased appropriations are not obtained easily, but with respect to home care of dependent children Congress

<sup>36</sup> A bill providing for pensions for needy mothers was introduced in the House of Representatives in 1914, but it applied to the whole United States.

has shown a ready interest. This is evidenced by the number of attempts made to obtain the enactment of a mothers' aid law for the District of Columbia during the 10 years before the act was passed. Residents of the District who were actively interested in this law know that delay in enactment was due in large part to lack of agreement among various groups in Washington. Congress accepted the estimate of \$100,000 recommended as necessary in the early years <sup>37</sup> and included this amount in the original act, but the appropriations for the following 2 years were less because evidence presented as to needs did not convince the appropriations committee that this amount was required. In subsequent years appropriations were increased, until expenditures in 1933 and 1934 showed that the amount made available was not used. It is difficult to understand the failure to use the entire appropriation, especially during the years of economic stress.

#### *Average grants.*

Although the number of families and children receiving aid through the Division of Home Care has apparently been unduly limited, the Division has maintained an excellent record with respect to the amount of aid per family. Table 8 shows the expenditure for aid each month from January 1935 through January 1936. The average monthly grant of approximately \$61 per family compares very favorably with similar grants in other communities. It is obvious that such averages give only a rough idea of the aid received by each family. In order to obtain an accurate picture the data should be worked out by computing "case days" rather than by dividing the monthly expenditures by the total number of families receiving aid throughout the month or for part of the month. The actual amounts received by many families aided throughout the month are considerably higher than the average amount shown.

TABLE 8.—*Amount paid each month under the Home-Care Act to families with dependent children, number of families on allowance, and number of children in families eligible for aid on last day of each month, January 1935 to January 1936*

Year and month	Amount paid to families during month	Number of families on allowance at end of month <sup>1</sup>	Number of children in families eligible for aid at end of month <sup>1</sup>	Average amount of aid per family <sup>1</sup>	Average amount of aid per child <sup>1</sup>
<i>1935</i>					
January.....	\$13,797.00	219	743	\$63.00	\$18.57
February.....	13,782.00	217	735	63.51	18.75
March.....	13,698.00	215	727	63.71	18.84
April.....	13,643.00	214	727	63.75	18.77
May.....	13,658.00	214	720	63.82	18.97
June.....	13,509.00	211	712	63.13	18.97
July.....	12,229.30	197	666	62.08	18.36
August.....	11,725.90	192	653	61.07	17.96
September.....	11,532.65	192	651	60.07	17.72
October.....	11,240.70	192	644	58.55	17.45
November.....	11,252.75	190	640	59.23	17.58
December.....	11,788.70	197	652	59.84	18.08
<i>1936</i>					
January.....	13,214.55	216	702	61.18	18.97

<sup>1</sup> The number of families on allowance at the end of the month was slightly larger or smaller, in most instances, than the number receiving aid during the month; therefore, the effect of using in this table the number on allowance at the end of the month is slightly to understate or to overstate the average amount of aid per family.

<sup>37</sup> This amount was first proposed in bills presented in 1922 on the basis of recommendations contained in the United States Children's Bureau report, *Child Dependency in the District of Columbia* (Publication 140, 1924); see pp. 100-101 for method of arriving at the estimate for the first year's needs.



*Children aided.*

At the end of the first 8 months of operation of the Division of Home Care, 362 children were beneficiaries of public aid in their own homes. On June 30, 1935, 712 children were beneficiaries. The numbers of children in families receiving assistance on June 30 of each fiscal year were as follows:

Year	Number of children		
	Total	White	Colored
1927-----	362	196	166
1928-----	434	265	169
1929-----	473	279	194
1930-----	516	263	253
1931-----	595	292	303
1932-----	640	295	345
1933-----	719	332	387
1934-----	669	284	385
1935-----	712	314	398

In contrast with some other communities in which there is a large colored population, the figures for the District of Columbia indicate that home care has been given to about equal numbers of white and of colored families and children, but it is recognized that the need for aid is proportionately much greater among colored families.

The number of children for whom aid has been granted has averaged approximately 3.5 per family. This average is higher than that found in many other localities. It would appear to reflect a general policy of excluding from aid families with only one or two children. With the limited expenditures it has obviously been necessary to restrict the types of families given aid, but there has been much concern among social agencies in Washington because the regulations of the Division of Home Care apparently excluded some families who were in great need.

### Families on Relief Rolls Eligible for Aid to Dependent Children

Even in the cities with greater provision for aid to dependent children in their own homes, only a small proportion of the families that should be given this form of aid have received it. Estimates presented in Congressional hearings on the Federal Social Security Bill indicated that for the United States as a whole about three and one-third times as many families of approximately comparable status received emergency relief as received aid to dependent children.<sup>38</sup>

A study of so-called unemployables on the rolls of the Public-Assistance Division of the District of Columbia Board of Public Welfare, made by the Research Bureau of that Division, showed that families with no employable members receiving relief on December 31, 1934, included the following:

	Number of fam- ilies	Number of chil- dren un- der 16 years of age
Total-----	894	3, 771
Families of widows, women divorced or separated from their husbands, and unmarried mothers with dependent children under 16 years of age-----	621	2, 303
Families of married women with young children but with no employable member-----	273	1, 468

<sup>38</sup> Hearings on S. 1130 before the Committee on Finance, U. S. Senate, 74th Cong., 1st Sess., part 6, Feb. 4 and 5, 1935, p. 337 (revised edition).



Under the Home-Care Act of the District, aid was given to 194 families with 669 children on June 30, 1934, and to 211 families with 712 children on June 30, 1935.

A larger proportion of colored mothers is found among the families receiving emergency relief than among the families receiving aid from the Division of Home Care. The figures are as follows:

	<i>Total</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Colored</i>
Families receiving aid under the Home-Care Act on June 30, 1935.....	211	99	112
Families of dependent mothers and children, with no employable member, receiving relief on December 31, 1934.....	894	234	660

Investigation would undoubtedly show that some of the families receiving relief were not sufficiently stable to warrant bringing them under the home-care plan. On the other hand, other families with employable members (for example, one minor child over the age of 16 years) would probably be found eligible for aid to dependent children. On December 31, 1934, 2,813 such families headed by mothers were receiving relief from the Public-Assistance Division.

For the 894 families of widows or other mothers having no employable member of the family, relief from the Public-Assistance Division averaged \$26.24 a month, an amount far below an average for a standard of living, maintained over a long period of time, that would be safe for the rearing of children in health and decency, with opportunities for normal growth and development.

#### Aid to Dependent Children Under the Social Security Act

When funds became available under the Social Security Act for reimbursement to the District of one-third of the expenditures for aid to dependent children in their own homes or in homes of other relatives, the Board of Public Welfare segregated for this form of aid the general relief cases that came under the definition specified in the act. Under this plan the number increased from 216 families given assistance under the Home-Care Act of the District in January 1936 to 1,867 families receiving aid under the Home-Care Act and the Social Security Act in February 1936. The number of children benefited was increased from 702 to 4,678.

During the first 6 months—February through July 1936—the number of families receiving aid averaged 1,625 a month, and the number of children averaged 4,288. During the 6 months, January through June 1937, the number of families averaged 1,241 a month, with an average of 3,500 children. In September 1937 aid was given to 1,213 families with 3,506 children. Expenditures for aid totaled during the month \$50,555. The average grant per family was \$41.68.

TABLE 9.—*Amount paid each month under the Social Security Act to families with dependent children, and number of families and number of children aided; February 1936 to September 1937, inclusive*<sup>1</sup>

Month	Amount paid to families	Number of families aided	Number of children aided	Average amount per family	Average amount per child
<i>1936</i>					
February.....	\$60,769	1,867	4,678	\$32.55	\$12.99
March.....	57,213	1,615	4,217	35.43	13.57
April.....	57,858	1,583	4,197	36.55	13.79
May.....	57,785	1,591	4,232	36.32	13.65
June.....	57,492	1,533	4,199	37.50	13.69
July.....	<sup>2</sup> 44,803	1,559	4,204	( <sup>2</sup> )	( <sup>2</sup> )
August.....	56,881	1,575	4,224	36.11	13.47
September.....	62,879	1,452	3,994	43.31	15.74
October.....	62,559	1,378	3,793	45.40	16.49
November.....	66,831	1,335	3,705	50.06	18.04
December.....	67,345	1,317	3,655	51.14	18.43
<i>1937</i>					
January.....	65,240	1,275	3,577	51.17	18.24
February.....	63,006	1,234	3,459	51.06	18.22
March.....	60,718	1,234	3,461	49.20	17.54
April.....	58,961	1,150	3,528	47.17	16.71
May.....	54,766	1,228	3,506	44.60	15.62
June.....	57,675	1,223	3,470	47.16	16.62
July.....	51,426	1,224	3,490	42.01	14.74
August.....	49,987	1,224	3,536	40.84	14.14
September.....	50,555	1,213	3,506	41.68	14.42

<sup>1</sup> Data obtained from the District of Columbia Board of Public Welfare, corrected through Nov. 8, 1937.

<sup>2</sup> The smaller payment in this month was due to a change in accounting procedures; therefore the averages are not computed.

Under the Home-Care Act the monthly aid averaged \$58.55 to \$63.82 per family between January 1935 and January 1936. During the present type of administration—from February 1936 through September 1937—the average monthly aid per family has ranged from \$32.55 to \$51.17.<sup>38a</sup> Some of the apparent difference may be attributed to the inclusion under the Social Security Act of smaller family groups than the Division of Home Care has been accustomed to accepting, but the average amount of aid per child was almost \$19 a month under the Home-Care Act, as against \$14.42 for the two groups together in September 1937. The averages were substantially higher during the winter months. No conclusion as to the meaning of these figures could be reached without detailed case studies showing the budgetary standards and the differences in the types of families comprising the group receiving aid to dependent children as compared with those receiving aid under the Home-Care Act.

Mothers' aid, or home care, as it has been called in the District of Columbia, is a form of family relief established in order to assure care in their own homes for the large group of children whose fathers are dead, absent from the home, or disabled. These families are in special need of the security that comes from assistance that is continuous and that supplies the needs of normal family life. Long before mothers' pensions were provided generally from public funds, private family-welfare agencies recognized the desirability of setting apart families of this type and giving them the assurance of regular aid on a budget basis. This ideal has been attained in a measure by

<sup>38a</sup> For December 1937 the average relief grant for aid to dependent children was \$45.42, and under the Home-Care Act, \$59.19, with an average for the two groups of \$47.58.

the Division of Home Care, which has safeguarded the welfare of approximately 700 children. Through funds made available by the Federal Social Security Act, such aid can now be extended to a much larger number of children who are equally in need of it.

Some confusion of terms has come about through the use of the term "dependent children" for the group aided in their own homes under the Social Security Act, as well as for those cared for by institutions and agencies. In the original and usually understood meaning, dependent children are the group taken under the care of child-welfare organizations because their parents or other relatives are unable to provide for them. This merging of terminology for what has previously been thought of as two distinct groups of children is a hopeful sign, perhaps forecasting general acceptance of the fact that the difference is not in types of children but in the way in which their problems have been met by social agencies.

The need for aiding families deprived of the father's support has been amply demonstrated. There still remains the problem of actually providing security for approximately 4,000 children in the District of Columbia who are now receiving assistance. Because of the temporary availability of relief funds and supplemental Social Security funds, an amount is now being spent monthly that would mean an annual expenditure of approximately \$700,000. Grants under the Social Security Act are made on the basis of expenditures. Unless the Board of Public Welfare is assured relief funds that will make it possible to continue aid to dependent children at the present rate, the scope of the plan will have to be reduced. If this should happen, more than 3,000 children would be left to the insecurity of the present relief situation in the District.

# DELINQUENT CHILDREN BEFORE THE JUVENILE COURT

## Purpose and Scope of Study

It is not the purpose of this study to describe the mechanism and policies of the court nor to make more than a very general analysis of the problem of juvenile delinquency in the District of Columbia.

The data presented in the following cross section of the delinquency problem were compiled from information obtained from court dockets and from statistical cards made out by the probation office for each child coming to the attention of the juvenile court, officially or unofficially, during the 4 months, April, May, June, and July 1935. These summaries were used as a basis for study of children committed to the Board of Public Welfare because of delinquency.

## Official and Unofficial Cases

During the 4 months, 617 children came before the juvenile court for official or unofficial hearings on delinquency charges.<sup>39</sup> Of these, 556 were boys and 61 were girls. The distribution according to type of hearing, color, and sex is shown in table 10.

TABLE 10.—*Number of white and colored boys and girls brought before the juvenile court in official and unofficial delinquency cases during the period April-July 1935*

Color and sex of child	Children brought before court		
	Total	In official cases	In unofficial cases
Total.....	617	428	189
Boys.....	556	383	173
White.....	181	103	78
Colored.....	375	280	95
Girls.....	61	45	16
White.....	17	11	6
Colored.....	44	34	10

<sup>39</sup> During this period the total number of delinquency cases in which these boys and girls were brought before the court on new charges was 634 (table 11).



TABLE 11.—*Manner of handling delinquency cases of white and colored boys and girls brought before the juvenile court during the period April–July 1935*

Manner of handling case; and color and sex of child	Delinquency cases brought before the court during—				
	Entire period	April	May	June	July
Total cases.....	634	152	163	121	198
Official.....	1 445	115	112	106	112
Unofficial.....	189	37	51	15	86
Boys' cases.....	573	140	146	108	179
White boys.....	182	40	44	37	61
Official cases.....	104	29	27	32	16
Unofficial cases.....	78	11	17	5	45
Colored boys.....	391	100	102	71	118
Official cases.....	296	75	72	67	82
Unofficial cases.....	95	25	30	4	36
Girls' cases.....	61	12	17	13	19
White girls.....	17	2	8	5	2
Official cases.....	11	2	6	1	2
Unofficial cases.....	6	—	2	4	—
Colored girls.....	44	10	9	8	17
Official cases.....	34	9	7	6	12
Unofficial cases.....	10	1	2	2	5

<sup>1</sup> One white boy and 16 colored boys came before the court for official hearings on different charges in 2 of the months included in the study: the total number of children was, therefore, 428, and the total cases were 445.

According to the 1930 census of the United States, 27 percent of the population of the District of Columbia were colored. Differences between the two races with respect to problems that bring them to the attention of social agencies are reflected in the comparative numbers of white and colored children coming before the court because of delinquency. Only 32 percent of the children were white; 68 percent were colored.

### Ages of the Children

There was no significant difference between the ages of children brought before the court officially and those brought unofficially (table 12). It appears to be the usual practice of the police and court officials not to bring delinquency charges against children under 9 years of age. Only seven children under 9 years of age were brought before the court officially or unofficially; one, a 6-year-old girl, had told the police officer that she was 2 years older than she was later found to be.

Sixty percent of the children were 14 years of age or over. Cases involving five boys who were 17 years of age and therefore not under the court's jurisdiction were dismissed when the correct ages were discovered. There is a striking difference between the ages of white and colored boys; 30 percent of the white boys as compared with 47 percent of the colored boys were under 14 years of age. Five of the 17 white girls and 12 of the 44 colored girls were under 14 years of age.

TABLE 12.—*Age of white and colored boys and girls brought before the juvenile court in official and unofficial delinquency cases during the period April–July 1935*

Age of child	Children brought before the court								
	Total	White boys		Colored boys		White girls		Colored girls	
		Official cases	Unofficial cases	Official cases	Unofficial cases	Official cases	Unofficial cases	Official cases	Unofficial cases
Total .....	617	103	78	280	95	11	6	34	10
6 years .....	2				1	1			
7 years .....	1				1				
8 years .....	4		2		1		1		
9 years .....	20	3	1	10	6				
10 years .....	29	4	5	14	4		1		1
11 years .....	44	5	2	27	7	1		2	
12 years .....	66	6	9	34	12			4	1
13 years .....	82	8	10	39	20	1		2	2
14 years .....	127	20	19	61	13	3		9	2
15 years .....	142	34	15	58	17	1	1	14	2
16 years .....	95	23	15	34	11	4	3	3	2
17 years .....	5			3	2				

### Offenses Charged Against Boys

Three-fourths of the charges against boys brought before the juvenile court for official hearings were offenses against property (table 13). In the cases of 67 percent of the white boys and 77 percent of the colored boys the complaints alleged petty larceny, more serious forms of larceny or burglary, unlawful entry, unauthorized use of automobile, destruction of property, or attempts to commit depredations of these kinds. One-sixth of the complaints charged disorderly conduct, incorrigibility, or truancy. The remaining cases included traffic violations, false fire alarms, injury to person, and sex offenses.

Complaints in the cases dealt with unofficially by the court were in general of a much less serious nature than in those handled officially (table 14). Nearly half of the group handled unofficially involved offenses against property—50 percent of the cases of white boys and 44 percent of colored boys. A considerable proportion of the offenses in the cases handled unofficially appeared to be very trivial. In more than a third of these cases the complaints were disorderly conduct, trespassing on railroad property, playing ball in street or alley, riding a bicycle on the sidewalk, distributing handbills, and, since the Fourth of July was within the period studied, discharging fireworks.

TABLE 13.—*Reason for reference to court in official delinquency cases of white and colored boys brought before the court during the period April–July 1935*

Reason for reference to court <sup>1</sup>	Official delinquency cases		
	Total	White boys	Colored boys
Total cases.....	400	104	296
Grand larceny or attempted grand larceny.....	7		7
Grand larceny and petty larceny.....	1		1
Robbery and petty larceny.....	2		2
Robbery.....	1		1
Housebreaking and attempted grand larceny.....	1		1
Housebreaking.....	46	18	28
Housebreaking and robbery.....	1		1
Housebreaking and petty larceny.....	4	1	3
Housebreaking and unauthorized use of automobile.....	3		3
Housebreaking and incorrigibility.....	1		1

<sup>1</sup> The reasons for reference are those reported by complainant. Police charges of petty larceny, grand larceny, robbery, and housebreaking are entered on the formal complaint as T. P. A.—taking property of another.

TABLE 13.—Reason for reference to court in official delinquency cases of white and colored boys brought before the court during the period April-July 1935—Con.

Reason for reference to court	Official delinquency cases		
	Total	White boys	Colored boys
Unlawful entry.....	38	5	33
Unlawful entry and false alarm.....	2		2
Unlawful entry and disorderly conduct.....	1		1
Unlawful entry and violating probation.....	8		8
Attempted unlawful entry.....	3		3
Petty larceny.....	97	21	76
Petty larceny and unauthorized use of automobile.....	1		1
Petty larceny and violating probation.....	15		15
Attempted petty larceny and violating probation.....	3	3	
Receiving stolen property.....	3	2	1
Unauthorized use of automobile.....	38	15	23
Unauthorized use of automobile and violating probation.....	7	1	6
Attempted unauthorized use of automobile.....	1	1	
Destroying public property.....	1	1	
Destroying private property.....	11	2	9
Destroying private property and unauthorized use of automobile.....	1		1
Traffic violation.....	10	5	5
Traffic violation and violating probation.....	1		1
False fire alarm.....	3		3
Concealed weapons.....	1	1	
Assault (injury to person).....	14		14
Sex offense.....	6	1	5
Disorderly conduct.....	11	6	5
Disorderly conduct and violating probation.....	1		1
Selling in districted zone.....	1	1	
Swimming nude.....	1		
Incorrigibility.....	26	7	19
Incorrigibility and violating probation.....	19	7	12
Tuancy.....	7	4	3
Tuancy and violating probation.....	2	1	1

TABLE 14.—Reason for reference to court in unofficial delinquency cases of white and colored boys brought before the court during the period April-July 1935

Reason for reference to court <sup>1</sup>	Unofficial delinquency cases		
	Total	White boys	Colored boys
Total cases.....	173	78	95
Robbery.....	1		1
Housebreaking.....	1		1
Attempted housebreaking.....	2	2	
Unlawful entry.....	3	3	
Obtaining money under false pretenses.....	1		1
Petty larceny.....	44	14	30
Attempted petty larceny.....	1		1
Unauthorized use of automobile.....	1		1
Destroying public property.....	3	3	
Destroying private property.....	17	11	6
False fire alarm.....	1	1	
Traffic violation.....	3	3	
Gaming.....	1		1
Assault (injury to person).....	6	1	5
Breaking glass on street.....	2	2	
Trespassing on railroad property.....	7	6	1
Disorderly conduct.....	39	11	28
Acts of carelessness and mischief.....	2		2
Jumping on moving vehicles.....	1		1
Discharging fireworks.....	14	10	4
Incorrigibility.....	2		2
Riding bicycle on sidewalk.....	3	1	2
Unlicensed vending.....	1		1
Distributing handbills.....	3	1	2
Swimming nude.....	1		1
Playing ball in street or alley.....	5	5	
Throwing missiles.....	8	4	4

<sup>1</sup> The reasons for reference are those reported by complainant. Police charges of petty larceny, grand larceny, robbery, and housebreaking are entered on the formal complaint as T. P. A.—taking property of another.

Tables 13 and 14 list the charges entered by police officers or others making the complaints. Study of case histories and detailed descriptions of offenses showed that the official charge did not always indicate the nature of the offense. Charges of housebreaking and unlawful entry, for example, covered a wide range of offenses, some of them of a serious nature and others that might have been described as trespassing on property or malicious mischief. "Unauthorized use of automobile" was sometimes a euphemistic term for theft or attempted theft of an automobile, but often it meant taking a "joy ride" in a car that the owner had left conveniently unlocked. In incorrigibility cases, on the other hand, although the complaints were sometimes made by parents who were unable to control the boys, there was often a history of specific offenses or conduct that made it necessary to restrain the boy from continuing a career of delinquency.

### Offenses Charged Against Girls

Of the 61 girls brought before the juvenile court for official or unofficial hearings, 17 were charged with larceny or other offenses against property and 6 with injury to person, traffic violation, or throwing missiles. The most prevalent complaints were incorrigibility and disorderly conduct, involving 24 and 10 girls, respectively. Three girls were charged with truancy and 1 with sex delinquency. Case records indicated that most of the 38 girls in this group were of the type usually designated as sex delinquents. (Tables 15 and 16.)

TABLE 15.—Reason for reference to court in official delinquency cases of white and colored girls brought before the court during the period April–July 1935

Reason for reference to court	Official delinquency cases		
	Total	White girls	Colored girls
Total cases.....	45	11	34
Grand larceny.....	2		2
Forgery.....	1		1
Unlawful entry.....	5		5
Petty larceny.....	6	1	5
Destroying private property.....	2	2	
Traffic violation.....	1	1	
Assault (injury to person).....	2		2
Sex delinquency.....	1		1
Disorderly conduct.....	1		1
Incorrigibility.....	19	4	15
Incorrigibility and violating probation.....	2		2
Truancy.....	3	3	

TABLE 16.—Reason for reference to court in unofficial delinquency cases of white and colored girls brought before the court during the period April–July 1935

Reason for reference to court	Unofficial delinquency cases		
	Total	White girls	Colored girls
Total cases.....	16	6	10
Petty larceny.....	1		1
Assault (injury to person).....	2	1	1
Disorderly conduct.....	9	3	6
Incorrigibility.....	3	1	2
Throwing missiles.....	1	1	

Girls' cases differed radically from boys' cases, as to both the number brought before the court, officially or unofficially, and the nature of the offenses charged. Such differences are common to all juvenile



courts, but the proportionate number of girls' cases brought before the juvenile court of the District of Columbia appears to be unusually small.

### Record of Previous Offenses

The 445 delinquency cases brought before the juvenile court for official hearings in the 4 months were only those in which there were new charges of delinquency during the period. In 222 of these cases there was a record of previous court appearances, either official or unofficial. Of the white boys 38 percent were repeaters and of the colored boys, 57 percent. Two of the 11 white girls and 12 of the 34 colored girls had been before the court previously on delinquency charges. (Table 17.)

There are sometimes unofficial cases with records of previous official or unofficial court hearings on delinquency charges, but as a general rule cases were dealt with unofficially only if the charges were of a minor character and there was no record of previous conduct that indicated the need for official handling of the case.

TABLE 17.—*Previous court experience of white and colored boys and girls in official delinquency cases brought before the juvenile court during the period April-July 1935*

Color and sex of child	Official delinquency cases		
	Total	Children with no previous court experience	Children with previous court experience
Total cases.....	445	223	222
Boys:			
White.....	104	64	40
Colored.....	296	128	168
Girls:			
White.....	11	9	2
Colored.....	34	22	12

### Home Conditions as a Cause of Delinquency

Data susceptible to statistical compilation can reveal only the bare outlines of social conditions, serving as the basis for certain general premises. Figures relating to the types of homes from which delinquent children come to the attention of juvenile courts invariably show a large proportion of cases in which the home had been broken by the death of a parent or by divorce, desertion, or separation.

A "broken home" is not necessarily coincident with neglect or delinquency; many children in all levels of society suffer from this handicap without becoming objects of concern to child-caring or correctional agencies. No figures are available as to the prevalence of broken homes in the general population, upon which conclusions might be based as to the comparative incidence of broken homes among families in the lower economic groups. From a study of court records we can safely say that the majority of the children come to the court from families of the lower economic levels, and that the interrelated factors of financial stress, bad housing, low standards of family life, and inability of the mother alone to maintain a normal home are potent causes of juvenile delinquency.

The prevention of delinquency must be concerned with the conditions that lie behind the conduct of the individual child. Data on

whereabouts of the children and parental status are merely surface indications of home conditions. The whole story can be told only by case histories that show for individual children the effect of home and environmental conditions. Records of children who come before the juvenile court are in general a monotonous recital of the same story with variations—low standards of family life, caused by deprivation of necessities or by shiftlessness, immorality, intemperance, subnormal mentality, or bad housing; neighborhoods without opportunities for recreation that will not conflict with city regulations; mothers working away from home and providing an inadequate subsistence for the family; children left to their own devices, getting into trouble with gangs.

There are, of course, numerous cases in which home conditions cannot be held responsible for the depredations or difficulties for which the children are brought into court. Here is a field for study by staffs of child-guidance clinics and other experts in the causes of personal maladjustment.

There are also cases in which the only reason that can be assigned for the delinquent behavior seems to be "pure cussedness." Some of these may be solved through understanding the child's experiences in the home and the school, his emotional outlets, his ambitions, and the opportunities for breaking laws and ordinances.

In many of the cases in which the offense was listed as "unauthorized use of automobile," the adventure was facilitated by owners who left their cars unlocked. Children brought to the court by police officers for discharging fireworks during the Fourth of July period and those apprehended because of infractions that can hardly be classed as willful law-breaking may also, in the main, be exempted from the group in which home conditions or personal maladjustment, or these factors together, are causes of delinquent behavior. But in most cases the histories of boys and girls charged with larceny, housebreaking, sex delinquency, truancy, or incorrigibility indicate the influence of bad living conditions as well as personal maladjustments.

### Whereabouts of the Children

Almost half of the 617 boys and girls who came officially and unofficially before the juvenile court because of delinquency during the period studied were from broken homes or were living away from their parental homes. One-fourth of the children came from homes in which the mother was the head of the household. Fifty-two percent of the children lived with both parents; 48 percent lived with a parent and a stepparent, or with the mother or the father, or were in another family home or an institution.

The whereabouts of the children at the time they were referred to court was as follows:

	Whereabouts of child	Percent distribution
Total	-----	100. 0
Child living with:		
Both parents	-----	51. 8
Mother and stepfather	-----	4. 3
Father and stepmother	-----	. 1
Mother	-----	25. 9
Father	-----	5. 0
Child away from own home:		
In another family home	-----	12. 2
In institution	-----	. 7

The cases dealt with unofficially differed from those heard officially not only in the seriousness of offenses but also in the types of homes from which the children came. Of the boys and girls appearing before the court officially, nearly 47 percent lived with both parents, as compared with 63 percent of those dealt with unofficially. The figures on children living with the mother only are astonishingly similar for the two groups—28 percent for official cases and 21 percent for unofficial cases.

There is a striking difference between the home conditions of the white children and the colored children. Sixty-one percent of the white children lived with both parents, as compared with 47 percent of the colored children. Twenty-two percent of the white children and 28 percent of the colored children were with the mother only. Seven percent of the white children and 16 percent of the colored children were in other family homes or in institutions. The proportionate numbers of children who were living with a parent and a stepparent or with the father only did not differ appreciably in the two groups.

### Parental Status

Parental status was reported for 580 of the 617 children. Two percent of these children were whole orphans; the father was dead in 15 percent and the mother in 7 percent of the cases.

Three percent of the delinquent children were reported to be of illegitimate birth; it is probable that this figure is too low, since it is not likely that birth status would in all cases be known for children of the ages of those who came before the court because of delinquency. Data in regard to divorce and desertion are also likely to be somewhat questionable. According to the reports, one of the parents had deserted in 7 percent of the cases; in 2 percent the parents were divorced; and in 8 percent the parents were "living apart." The last category included cases in which one parent was in a penal institution, a sanitarium, or a hospital, as well as those in which the parents were reported as separated. Fifty-six percent of the parents were living together.

The parental status of the children at the time they were referred to court was as follows:

<i>Parental status</i>	<i>Percent distribution</i>
Total.....	100. 0
Parents living together.....	55. 7
Both parents dead.....	2. 2
Father dead.....	14. 8
Mother dead.....	7. 4
Child illegitimate.....	2. 8
Parents divorced.....	1. 9
Father deserting.....	6. 2
Mother deserting.....	. 9
Parents living apart.....	8. 1

One of the most significant facts brought out by analysis of these figures is the number of children from homes in which the mother was the sole head of the family. More than one-fourth of all the children brought before the court officially, and more than one-fifth of those dealt with unofficially lived with the mother, the father being dead or absent from the home. In addition to these, a considerable number of the children who were living in other family homes or in institutions

when they were charged with delinquency had apparently been removed previously from homes maintained by the mother alone. Tables 18 and 19 show the relation between whereabouts of the child and parental status, according to color and sex.

TABLE 18.—*Whereabouts and parental status of children brought before the juvenile court in official delinquency cases during the period April-July 1935*

Whereabouts of child and parental status at time of reference to court	Total	White boys	White girls	Colored boys	Colored girls
Total.....	428	103	11	280	34
With both parents in home.....	195	56	6	118	15
With mother and stepfather.....	22	6		16	
Father dead.....	8	1		7	
Parents divorced.....	7	3		4	
Child illegitimate.....	4			4	
Not reported.....	3	2		1	
With father and stepmother.....	1			1	
Mother dead.....	1			1	
With mother.....	117	26	5	80	6
Father dead.....	48	11	2	34	1
Child illegitimate.....	6		1	4	1
Parents divorced.....	3	2		1	
Father deserting.....	25	4		20	1
Parents living apart.....	20	5	2	12	1
Not reported.....	15	4		9	2
With father.....	23	7		14	2
Mother dead.....	15	2		11	2
Parents divorced.....	1	1			
Mother deserting.....	5	3		2	
Not reported.....	2	1		1	
In other family home.....	56	5		42	9
Both parents dead.....	12			11	1
Mother dead.....	17	2		13	2
Father dead.....	4	1		2	1
Child illegitimate.....	6			3	3
Father deserting.....	2			2	
Parents living together.....	5	1		4	
Parents living apart.....	7			6	1
Not reported.....	3	1		1	1
In institution.....	4	2			2
Mother dead.....	1	1			
Father dead.....	1				1
Parents living together.....	2	1			1
Not reported.....	10	1		9	



TABLE 19.—Whereabouts and parental status of children brought before the juvenile court in unofficial delinquency cases during the period April–July 1935

Whereabouts of child and parental status at time of reference to court	Total	White boys	White girls	Colored boys	Colored girls
Total.....	189	78	6	95	10
With both parents in home.....	119	53	5	57	4
With mother and stepfather.....	4	3		1	
Father dead.....	4	3		1	
With mother.....	40	12		23	5
Father dead.....	21	6		12	3
Father deserting.....	9	4		5	
Parents living apart.....	10	2		6	2
With father.....	7	4		3	
Mother dead.....	4	2		2	
Parents living apart.....	3	2		1	
In other family home.....	18	5	1	11	1
Parents living together.....	2		1	1	
Both parents dead.....	1			1	
Mother dead.....	5	1		4	
Parents living apart.....	7	2		4	1
Not reported.....	3	2		1	
Not reported.....	1	1			

## DEPENDENT CHILDREN UNDER THE CARE OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS

### Federal Census of Dependent and Neglected Children

No one knows the whole story of child dependency and neglect. Definite data can be obtained only in regard to children who, because of neglect or dependency or for other reasons, have been taken under the care of agencies and institutions. Many of these children are not actually dependent in the sense that their relatives cannot provide for their support, at least in part. But for all of them care outside their own homes has been thought to be necessary, either because of home conditions adjudged by the juvenile court to be detrimental; because of the inability of mothers to provide support and proper care for children when the fathers were dead or absent; because of the inability of fathers to maintain homes for children left motherless; or, in some cases, because one or both parents found it necessary or convenient to place their children in an institution, usually in order to permit employment of the mother.

In 1904, 1910, 1923, and 1933 the Federal Bureau of the Census took a special census of children under the care of institutions and agencies. Differences in the groups included in these enumerations and varying methods of compiling the data make it impossible to compare the figures of one census with another. The latest census, for December 31, 1933, is undoubtedly better planned and more specific than any of the preceding ones, both in its definition of inclusion and in the facts obtained. The published report on this census became available in January 1936.<sup>40</sup> The cooperation of the Bureau of the Census made it possible for the Children's Bureau to obtain from the original reports certain data in regard to each child cared for by institutions and agencies of the District of Columbia.<sup>41</sup>

As of December 31, 1933, 17 organizations<sup>42</sup> located in the District of Columbia reported 1,945 children receiving care in institutions or foster-family homes.<sup>43</sup> Of this total 1,863 children were residents of the District. Agencies and institutions in nearby States cared for 103 children who were District residents.<sup>44</sup> The total number of children classified as dependent or neglected whose residence was the District of Columbia and who were away from their own homes under direct care of institutions and agencies on the given date was, therefore,

<sup>40</sup> Children Under Institutional Care and in Foster Homes, 1933. U. S. Bureau of the Census. Washington, 1935. 125 pp.

<sup>41</sup> Data on which the following discussion is based were compiled by Caroline E. Legg of the Children's Bureau staff.

<sup>42</sup> The total number of agencies and institutions in the District is 20. The census report for the Division of Child Welfare of the Board of Public Welfare includes the Industrial Home School, the Industrial Home School for Colored Children, and the Receiving Home for Children.

<sup>43</sup> The total as given in the report of the Bureau of the Census is 1,928. In compiling the data the omission was noted of one agency from which information as of the given date was obtained and added to the census figures.

<sup>44</sup> This figure is probably an understatement; it was obtained as the result of a search through the census reports only for States that seemed likely to receive children from Washington because of their proximity or because they contained fraternal or sectarian institutions receiving children from other States.

1,966. This number represents 163 dependent children out of every 10,000 children under 18 years of age in the general population of the District according to the census of 1930.

### High Rate of Child Dependency in the District

In order to ascertain the status of the District of Columbia with respect to child dependency, data were obtained from the Bureau of the Census for 30 large areas. This list comprises areas with populations between 250,000 and a million, according to the 1930 census. The rate of dependent children was obtained by comparing the total child population of each area with the number of children who were residents of the area and who were away from their own homes under care of agencies and institutions. Table 20 shows that Washington (the District of Columbia) ranked second among the 30 areas in rate of dependent children, being outranked only by the San Francisco area and equaled by Rochester, N. Y., and Denver, Colo.

TABLE 20.—*Number of dependent and neglected children under care in institutions and foster homes whose residence was in specified areas,<sup>1</sup> and rate per 10,000 children under 18 years of age;<sup>2</sup> Dec. 31, 1933*

Residence when accepted for care <sup>1</sup>	Number of children under 18 years of age <sup>2</sup>	Children in institutions and foster homes	
		Number <sup>3</sup>	Rate per 10,000 children under 18 years of age
San Francisco, Calif.....	128,885	2,219	172
Rochester, N. Y.....	127,517	2,083	163
Washington, D. C.....	120,408	1,966	163
Denver, Colo.....	77,046	1,256	163
Louisville, Ky.....	106,080	1,677	158
Indianapolis, Ind.....	121,319	1,547	128
Boston, Mass.....	266,382	3,363	126
Providence, R. I.....	179,459	2,263	126
Buffalo, N. Y.....	248,401	3,075	123
Kansas City, Mo.....	123,136	1,453	118
Cleveland, Ohio.....	377,553	4,375	116
Cincinnati, Ohio.....	163,664	1,796	110
Baltimore, Md.....	246,093	2,566	104
St. Paul, Minn.....	86,436	876	101
Minneapolis, Minn.....	149,233	1,487	100
Portland, Oreg.....	86,194	766	89
Toledo, Ohio.....	105,956	940	89
Columbus, Ohio.....	104,332	916	88
Milwaukee, Wis.....	224,270	1,891	84
New Orleans, La.....	142,400	1,171	82
Newark, N. J.....	256,354	2,083	81
Memphis, Tenn.....	92,809	724	78
Seattle, Wash.....	122,527	940	77
St. Louis, Mo.....	217,245	1,453	67
Oakland, Calif.....	125,101	819	65
Dallas, Tex.....	99,821	625	63
Jersey City, N. J.....	227,362	1,406	62
Akron, Ohio.....	117,785	613	52
Houston, Tex.....	110,612	569	51
Birmingham, Ala.....	153,257	585	38

<sup>1</sup> Each area is designated by the name of the principal city and includes the entire county, except Baltimore and St. Louis, which are cities only.

<sup>2</sup> According to the 1930 census.

<sup>3</sup> According to unpublished data as of December 31, 1933, made available to the Children's Bureau by the U. S. Bureau of the Census.

A comparison of this kind may indicate several things. The areas with the highest rates of dependent children may be providing care for a larger proportion of children who are in need of such care than areas at the other end of the scale. This is undoubtedly true of Washington, where, through the public agency, care for colored children is extensive as compared with several of the areas whose dependency rates are low. A high rate may, and usually does, mean that the area has inadequate measures for prevention of child dependency. The numbers are also affected by the availability of public care or public subsidy to private agencies. This has a corollary of inadequate provision in many cities where public funds are not available for child care. In other words, figures such as these must be analyzed for each community with regard to adequacy of provision for children needing care away from their own homes, and with regard to the attention given to prevention of child dependency, especially by means of aid to children in their own homes, family relief and rehabilitation, and protection of children.

The foregoing sections of this study indicate that the District of Columbia has fairly adequate resources for all types of children needing care, but that the particular form of care needed for each child is not always available because of the limitations of public provision. If measures for the prevention of dependency were applied to a greater extent, the number of dependent children in Washington who must be cared for in foster homes and institutions would undoubtedly be reduced greatly.

In none of the areas in this list would conditions warrant a guess as to the normal rate of child dependency. It is, however, significant to note that in Milwaukee and in Minneapolis, areas ranking nineteenth and fifteenth in the list, the numbers of children receiving public aid in their own homes through mothers' aid laws in 1930 were almost as great as the numbers of children cared for by agencies and institutions.<sup>45</sup> In Washington, on the other hand, figures compiled coincidentally showed that only one-fourth as many children were receiving public aid in their own homes as were under the care of agencies and institutions. Neglect of this "first line of defense"—aid to children in their own homes—cannot fail to influence the child-dependency problem.

### Public and Private Care

Of the 1,966 dependent children in the District, 1,031 were under the direct care of the Board of Public Welfare, either in family homes or in the two Industrial Home Schools. Private institutions and agencies located in the District cared for 832 of the children, and organizations in other States had 103 children under care. Reports of the Board of Public Welfare indicate that about 30 children whose maintenance was paid for from public funds were under the care of institutions included in the census report. Thus, estimating roughly, approximately 52 percent of the care for dependent and neglected children of the District of Columbia was provided by the Board of Public Welfare and 48 percent by private agencies and institutions.

Data were not available as to the number of children whose parents or other relatives paid some part of their maintenance. It is an

<sup>45</sup> Data compiled for July 1, 1930. See *Child Dependency in the United States*, by Emma O. Lundberg, p. 103. Child Welfare League of America, New York, 1932.



accepted fact that even when relatives pay the full amount charged for care of children in an institution this does not cover the entire cost of maintenance, so that all children under care of agencies or institutions are at least partially dependent upon public or private funds. Both public and private agencies and institutions obtain whenever possible some payment toward the support of children from parents who are able to make a contribution, but there is undoubtedly a much larger proportion of partially dependent children in the populations of private institutions than among those who have been committed to the public child-caring agency.

### Racial Distribution

Two-thirds of the children cared for away from their own homes were white and one-third were colored. On the surface this is an unexpectedly low proportion of colored children, in view of the fact that 27 percent of the population of the District of Columbia are colored, according to the 1930 census, and that economic conditions and other factors that operate to create dependency are more prevalent among this race. This is a striking illustration of the truism that the actual number of dependent and neglected children in the District of Columbia or in any community is not shown by statistics on children under the care of agencies and institutions.

Two significant facts are brought out by figures on racial distribution: (1) 58 percent of the children provided for by the Board of Public Welfare through placement in boarding or free homes or in the Industrial Home Schools are colored; (2) only 9 percent of the children cared for by private agencies or institutions are colored (table 21). Or, from another approach, 66 percent of the dependent white children in the District are under care of private agencies or institutions as compared with 34 percent under the care of the Board of Public Welfare; only 12 percent of the colored children are cared for by private agencies and institutions, and 88 percent are public wards.

The explanation would appear to be, at least in part, the difference between the availability of institutional care for white and for colored children. It might also be found that the proportionate number of children whose maintenance must be paid for entirely by the agency or institution is much greater among the colored than among the white children. There is also the traditional tendency in the colored race for relatives or others to care for children without the aid of social agencies.

TABLE 21.—*Dependent and neglected white and colored children under public and private care in institutions and foster homes on Dec. 31, 1933*<sup>1</sup>

Type of care	Children in institutions and foster homes				
	Total	White		Colored	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total.....	1,966	1,291	66	675	34
Board of Public Welfare.....	1,031	438	42	593	58
Private agencies and institutions.....	935	853	91	82	9

<sup>1</sup> According to the Bureau of the Census. See p. 66.

### Ages of Children Under Care

Of the 1,966 children in foster homes or in institutions on December 31, 1933, 4 percent were under 2 years of age; 13 percent more were from 2 to 5 years, inclusive. Children of the usual elementary-school age, 6 to 13 years, inclusive, comprised 57 percent of the total number, and 26 percent were 14 years of age or over. (Table 22.)

TABLE 22.—*Age of dependent and neglected children under care in institutions and foster homes on Dec. 31, 1933*<sup>1</sup>

Age of child	Children in institutions and foster homes	
	Number	Percent distribution <sup>2</sup>
Total.....	1,966	100.0
Under 1 year.....	27	1.4
1 year.....	44	2.2
2 years.....	50	2.6
3 years.....	49	2.5
4 years.....	63	3.2
5 years.....	88	4.5
6 years.....	77	3.9
7 years.....	122	6.2
8 years.....	138	7.0
9 years.....	133	6.8
10 years.....	171	8.7
11 years.....	152	7.8
12 years.....	168	8.6
13 years.....	164	8.4
14 years.....	144	7.4
15 years.....	125	6.4
16 years.....	87	4.4
17 years.....	58	3.0
18 years.....	43	2.2
19 years.....	29	1.5
20 years.....	27	1.4
Not reported.....	7	-----

<sup>1</sup> According to the Bureau of the Census. See p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Percent distribution based on 1,959 children (1,029 under the care of the Board of Public Welfare and 930 under the care of private agencies and institutions) for whom age was reported.

### Ages of Children When Received for Care

The policies of agencies and institutions and the types of problems they meet are revealed in the figures on ages of children at the time they were received for care (table 23).

In this connection it should be noted that many of the children who are committed to the Board of Public Welfare have previously been under care of other agencies and institutions, and that certain institutions receive children who have passed the age limit set by institutions that care for very young children. Data on ages of the children when they were received by the agencies and institutions reporting do not, therefore, give a true picture of the ages at which the children became dependent.

Analysis of the reports on this point show that almost 14 percent of the children were taken under care of the reporting agencies and institutions when they were under 2 years old. The fact that 134

children of the 1,959 for whom age was reported were received for care when they were under 1 year old, and 135 at the age of 1 year, suggests the need for careful study of the reasons that so large a number of infants had to be cared for away from their mothers.

TABLE 23.—*Age of dependent and neglected children when received by public and private organizations for care in institutions and foster homes on Dec. 31, 1933*<sup>1</sup>

Age of child when received for care	Children in institutions and foster homes					
	Total		Under care of Board of Public Welfare		Under care of private agencies and institutions	
	Number	Percent distribution <sup>2</sup>	Number	Percent distribution <sup>2</sup>	Number	Percent distribution <sup>2</sup>
Total.....	1,966	100.0	1,031	100.0	935	100.0
Under 1 year.....	134	6.8	70	6.8	64	6.9
1 year.....	135	6.9	102	9.9	33	3.5
2 years, under 5.....	367	18.7	218	21.2	149	16.0
5 years, under 10.....	781	39.9	359	34.9	422	45.4
10 years, under 15.....	463	23.6	254	24.7	209	22.5
15 years, under 18.....	79	4.0	26	2.5	53	5.7
Not reported.....	7	-----	2	-----	5	-----

<sup>1</sup> According to the Bureau of the Census. See p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Percent distribution based on 1,959 children (1,029 under the care of the Board of Public Welfare and 930 under the care of private agencies and institutions) for whom age was reported.

A large proportion of the children placed in foster homes or institutions when they were under 2 years of age were children of illegitimate birth. Information on birth status was obviously very inadequate, especially in the reports from institutions. If the information were complete, it is probable that the number of infants of illegitimate birth would be found to be larger than the reports indicated.

### Length of Time Under Care

One-third of the children who were under care away from their own homes on the given date had been in foster homes or institutions 5 years or more (table 24). Forty-two percent of the children who were wards of the Board of Public Welfare had been cared for by the Board for 5 years or more. Twenty-two percent had been under care of private agencies and institutions 5 years or more.

The policies and practices of the various agencies and institutions regarding length of time children are under care are not revealed so much by figures based upon the present institution population as they would be by figures for children who have been discharged from care. This latter information, however, was not available in the census reports.

TABLE 24.—*Length of time under public and private care; dependent and neglected children in institutions and foster homes on Dec. 31, 1933*<sup>1</sup>

Length of time under care	Children in institutions and foster homes					
	Total		Under care of Board of Public Welfare		Under care of private agencies and institutions	
	Number	Percent distribution <sup>2</sup>	Number	Percent distribution	Number	Percent distribution <sup>2</sup>
Total.....	1, 966	100. 0	1, 031	100. 0	935	100. 0
Less than 1 year.....	450	22. 9	178	17. 3	272	29. 2
1 year.....	323	16. 4	163	15. 8	160	17. 1
2 years.....	230	11. 7	109	10. 6	121	13. 0
3 years.....	201	10. 2	105	10. 2	96	10. 3
4 years.....	114	5. 8	39	3. 8	75	8. 0
5 years, less than 10.....	493	25. 1	318	30. 8	175	18. 8
10 years, less than 15.....	118	6. 0	85	8. 2	33	3. 5
15 years or more.....	35	1. 8	34	3. 3	1	. 1
Time not reported.....	2				2	

<sup>1</sup> According to the Bureau of the Census. See p. 66.<sup>2</sup> Percent distribution based on the total of 1,964 children and the 933 children under care of private agencies and institutions for whom length of time under care was reported.

### Status of Parents of Dependent Children

The census reports included information in regard to the whereabouts of one or both parents of 1,624 of the 1,966 children under the care of agencies and institutions away from their own homes as of December 31, 1933. It may in many instances represent the whereabouts of the parents at the time the children were received for care, but it cannot be interpreted as having a direct bearing upon the reasons for the care of children away from their own homes. The data reported on the status of parents may, however, be indicative in a general way of home conditions underlying child dependency. Unfortunately institutions and agencies do not always obtain adequate facts about home conditions when a child is received or keep informed about changes that may occur.

Data were given concerning the whereabouts or status of one or both parents of 1,624 children; included in this number were 363 children for whom the whereabouts or status of the mother but not of the father was reported, and 149 children for whom information was available about the father but not about the mother.

In only 11 percent of the total number were both parents reported to be in the family home. Nine percent of the children were recorded as whole orphans.

Twenty-one percent of the children for whom information was available were reported to be of illegitimate birth. Large as this figure is, study of the reports made by some institutions indicated that it would have been still larger if reports on birth status had been more complete. The reason for this astonishingly high percentage of illegitimacy is found largely in the figures for the colored children. In the total number of children in each group for whom the status of one or both parents was reported, 13 percent of the white children and 35 percent of the colored children under care of agencies and institutions were of illegitimate birth. It is a very serious matter that more than one-fifth of the children in the District of Columbia



who are maintained at public or private expense are children handicapped by birth out of wedlock, whose fathers are for the most part not meeting their financial responsibilities, limited as these are under the laws of the District, and whose mothers are unable to provide care and maintenance.

The fathers of 3 percent of the children were known to be in penal institutions, and the same proportion were in other institutions. The mothers of 8 percent of the children were in institutions. It is assumed that those reported as "elsewhere"—6 percent of the fathers and 9 percent of the mothers—included parents who were divorced, who were living apart, or who had deserted their families. Obviously, a larger number of fathers than of mothers who were reported as unknown or whose whereabouts was not given belonged in this group, but the distribution of the numbers and percentages in all the groups would undoubtedly be changed considerably if complete reports had been obtained in regard to the parental status of all the children.

Table 25 gives the reported whereabouts of the father and of the mother in terms of numbers of children and percent distribution.

Omission from the census reports of facts in regard to whereabouts of the parents undoubtedly implies failure to obtain or to record this fundamental information. It is significant that most of the omissions occurred in reports from certain institutions conducted under private auspices. This evidence of ignorance in regard to the children points to neglect to ascertain home conditions when the children were received for care and to keep in touch with parents and other relatives with a view to restoring the children to their care if it should become possible to do so. This neglect of such preventive measures as careful intake, continued contacts with persons legally responsible for the children, and a definite plan for rehabilitating homes is, in the last analysis, the greatest factor in creating and continuing child dependency. It is a costly neglect, both in terms of taxpayers' dollars and charitable contributions and in child welfare.

TABLE 25.—*Status and whereabouts of parents of dependent and neglected children under care of institutions and foster homes on Dec. 31, 1933*<sup>1</sup>

Status and whereabouts of parents	Children under care					
	Number			Percent distribution		
	Total	White	Colored	Total	White	Colored
Total.....	1,966	1,291	675	-----	-----	-----
Whereabouts reported.....	1,624	1,025	599	100.0	100.0	100.0
Both parents in the home.....	184	121	63	11.3	11.8	10.5
Both parents dead.....	145	89	56	8.9	8.7	9.4
Father dead.....	197	145	52	12.1	14.1	8.7
Mother in the home.....	102	77	25	6.3	7.5	4.2
Mother in institution.....	9	-----	9	.6	-----	1.5
Mother elsewhere.....	9	4	5	.6	.4	.8
Mother unknown or not reported.....	77	64	13	4.7	6.2	2.2
Father in penal institution.....	45	31	14	2.8	3.0	2.3
Mother in the home.....	16	13	3	1.0	1.3	.5
Mother dead.....	8	5	3	.5	.5	.5
Mother in institution.....	1	1	-----	.1	.1	-----
Mother elsewhere.....	15	7	8	.9	.7	1.3
Mother unknown or not reported.....	5	5	-----	.3	.5	-----

<sup>1</sup> According to the Bureau of the Census. See p. 66.

TABLE 25.—*Status and whereabouts of parents of dependent and neglected children under care of institutions and foster parents on Dec. 31, 1933—Continued*

Status and whereabouts of parents	Children under care					
	Number			Percent distribution		
	Total	White	Colored	Total	White	Colored
Whereabouts reported—Continued.						
Father in other institution.....	44	43	1	2.7	4.2	.2
Mother in the home.....	17	17	—	1.1	1.7	—
Mother dead.....	5	4	1	.3	.4	.2
Mother in institution.....	9	9	—	.6	.9	—
Mother elsewhere.....	1	1	—	.1	.1	—
Mother unknown or not reported.....	12	12	—	.7	1.2	—
Father in the home.....	210	150	60	12.9	14.6	10.0
Mother dead.....	108	72	36	6.6	7.0	6.0
Mother in institution.....	37	27	10	2.3	2.6	1.7
Mother elsewhere.....	18	15	3	1.1	1.5	.5
Mother unknown or not reported.....	47	36	11	2.9	3.5	1.8
Father elsewhere.....	100	45	55	6.2	4.4	9.2
Mother in the home.....	17	10	7	1.0	1.0	1.2
Mother dead.....	23	11	12	1.4	1.1	2.0
Mother in penal institution.....	1	—	1	.1	—	.2
Mother in other institution.....	14	5	9	.9	.5	1.5
Mother elsewhere.....	37	14	23	2.3	1.3	3.8
Mother unknown.....	8	5	3	.5	.5	.5
Father unknown or not reported.....	363	272	91	22.4	26.5	15.2
Mother in the home.....	196	144	52	12.1	14.0	8.7
Mother dead.....	119	93	26	7.3	9.1	4.3
Mother in institution.....	29	23	6	1.8	2.2	1.0
Mother elsewhere.....	19	12	7	1.2	1.2	1.2
Child born out of wedlock.....	336	129	207	20.7	12.6	34.6
Mother in the home.....	87	47	40	5.4	4.6	6.7
Mother dead.....	55	6	49	3.4	.6	8.2
Mother in penal institution.....	3	2	1	.2	.2	.2
Mother in other institution.....	28	7	21	1.7	.7	3.5
Mother elsewhere.....	46	13	33	2.8	1.3	5.5
Mother unknown or not reported.....	117	54	63	7.2	5.3	10.5
Whereabouts not reported.....	342	266	76	—	—	—

### Preventing Removal From Homes

Statistics such as the foregoing give only general indications of social and economic factors in child dependency. They can merely suggest the possibility of preventing some of the conditions that are apparent. Thoroughgoing investigation and action, case by case, are necessary in order to know the real causes of dependency and to prevent needless removal of children from their own homes. On the other hand, adequate information in regard to home conditions may reveal a real need for care of children away from their own homes in many instances where surface facts seemed to indicate that removal might have been avoided by means of case work with the family and financial assistance.

Mention has been made of the fact that parents in the District of Columbia who place their children in institutions and pay maintenance charges for them often do so in order to have the children cared for while the mother is employed. It is difficult, therefore, to attempt any estimate of the probable extent to which aid to families or enforce-

ment of parental responsibility might reduce the number of children supported in whole or in part by public or by private agencies.

The most obvious type of cases in which financial aid to families might prevent removal of children from their own homes is the group in which the mother is the head of the household, the father being dead or absent from the home. Eliminating from this group the 87 children born out of wedlock whose mothers were reported to be at home, the distribution of the 348 children in this classification was as follows:

Whereabouts of father	Children under care of—	
	Board of Public Welfare	Private agencies and insti- tutions
Total-----	141	207
Dead-----	50	52
In penal institution-----	13	3
In other institution-----	10	7
Elsewhere-----	17	---
Unknown or not reported-----	51	145

Although many of the families in which the father's whereabouts was not reported would probably not be eligible for mothers' aid, it would appear safe to estimate that at least 300 of the children who were in the care of agencies and institutions might be proper subjects for such provision in their own homes. How many of the children who were received for care by agencies and institutions might have remained in their own homes if such aid had been available and if their real needs had been known early enough is, of course, quite another question. Undoubtedly the actual number of children who might be cared for in their own homes would be very much larger than the number revealed by study of the situation on a given date, when many of the children had been under agency and institutional care for several years and home conditions had changed radically and many parents had been lost sight of. It is one thing to prevent removal of children from their own homes by means of timely aid and case work and another to reassemble a household that has been scattered.

### Child-Caring Agencies and Institutions in the District

The census reports covered 17 agencies and institutions <sup>46</sup> located in the District of Columbia, caring for 1,945 dependent children away from their own homes on December 31, 1933.<sup>47</sup> A total of 1,041 children were under the care of the Board of Public Welfare, including 956 placed in family homes under supervision of the Child-Welfare Division and 85 in the Industrial Home School (for white children) and the Industrial Home School for Colored Children. One child-caring agency and nine institutions under sectarian auspices cared for 636 children, four nonsectarian institutions and one nonsectarian agency cared for 222 children, and one institution under the auspices of a fraternal order had 46 children under care on the given date.

<sup>46</sup> One agency, which had 17 children in foster homes on the given date, was added by the Children's Bureau. Data in regard to children in the two Industrial Home Schools and in the Receiving Home for Children were included in the report made by the Board of Public Welfare.

<sup>47</sup> It should be noted that the foregoing sections deal with the 1,966 children in the care of agencies and institutions located in the District or elsewhere (insofar as reports could be obtained for those in other States) whose residence was the District of Columbia. Of the children cared for in agencies and institutions located in the District, 82 were not residents of the District; 103 children with District residence were under the care of agencies and institutions in neighboring States.



Of the total number of children cared for by agencies and institutions located in the District of Columbia, 1,298 were white and 647 were colored; that is, 67 percent of the children under care on the given date were white and 33 percent were colored. The Board of Public Welfare cared for 445 white children and 596 colored children. Only one of the private institutions and one agency cared for colored children—51 children on the given date as compared with 853 white children cared for by private organizations.

Of the total number of children, 914 were boys and 1,031 were girls. Eleven of the institutions under private auspices cared for both boys and girls. One received boys only and two received girls only.

Table 26 shows the agencies and institutions located in the District of Columbia, grouped according to the auspices under which they are conducted, with the number of boys and girls cared for by each, as reported to the United States Bureau of the Census on December 31, 1933.

TABLE 26.—*Dependent and neglected boys and girls under care in institutions and foster homes, by type of agency or institution giving care, on Dec. 31, 1933*<sup>1</sup>

Agency and institution giving care	Children in institutions and foster homes		
	Total	Boys	Girls
Total.....	1,945	914	1,031
Board of Public Welfare, Child-Welfare Division <sup>2</sup> .....	1,041	541	500
Private agencies and institutions.....	904	373	531
Sectarian:			
Catholic Charities of Washington.....	45	23	22
Children's Emergency Home.....	34	14	20
Episcopal Home for Children.....	76	36	40
Jewish Foster Home.....	46	26	20
St. Ann's Infant Asylum.....	73	34	39
St. John's Orphanage.....	40	14	26
St. Joseph's Home and School.....	69	69	
St. Rose's Technical School.....	84		84
St. Vincent's Home and School.....	111		111
Swartzell Methodist Home.....	58	24	34
Nonsectarian:			
Juvenile Protective Association.....	17	14	3
German Orphan Asylum.....	41	20	21
National Home for Destitute Colored Women and Children.....	44	29	15
Hillcrest (Washington City Orphan Asylum).....	69	8	61
Washington Home for Foundlings.....	51	37	14
Fraternal:			
Masonic and Eastern Star Home.....	46	25	21

<sup>1</sup> According to the Bureau of the Census. See p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Including the Child-Welfare Division, the Industrial Home School, the Industrial Home School for Colored Children, and the Receiving Home for Children.

### Types of Care Given Dependent Children

The difference in the types of care provided by organizations under public and under private auspices is shown in the strikingly high percentage of children under care of the Board of Public Welfare in foster homes, especially boarding homes (table 27). Of the dependent children under direct care of the Board 8 percent were in the two Industrial Home Schools, while 75 percent were cared for in boarding



homes and 17 percent in free homes or in work or wage homes.<sup>48</sup> Of the children provided for by organizations under private auspices, on the other hand, 92 percent were cared for in institutions, and only 7 percent in boarding homes and 1 percent in free homes.

The types of care given dependent children by public and private organizations are compared below:

<i>Type of care</i>	<i>Percent distribution</i>		
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Public</i>	<i>Private</i>
Total.....	100	100	100
Institution.....	47	8	92
Boarding home.....	43	75	7
Free home.....	8	13	1
Work or wage home.....	2	4	(1)

<sup>1</sup> Less than 1 percent.

<sup>48</sup> Adding to the number under direct care of the Board of Public Welfare the number (estimated as 30 for the given date) of wards cared for in private institutions at the expense of the Board, the percentages would be changed to: 11 percent in institutions; 72 percent in boarding homes, and 17 percent in free, work, or wage homes.

TABLE 27.—*Dependent and neglected white and colored children under care in institutions and in foster homes, by type of care and by type of agency and institution giving care, on Dec. 31, 1933<sup>1</sup>*

Agency and institution giving care	Type of care											
	Total number of children			Institution			Boarding home			Free home		
	Total	White	Colored	Total	White	Colored	Total	White	Colored	Total	White	Colored
<b>Total</b> .....	1,945	1,298	647	914	842	72	837	372	465	150	67	83
Board of Public Welfare.....	1,041	445	596	85	2 57	3 28	776	318	458	139	56	83
Private agencies and institutions.....	904	853	51	829	785	44	61	54	7	11	11	3
Secularian:												
Catholic Charities of Washington.....	45	45	—	—	—	—	34	34	—	8	8	—
Children's Emergency Home.....	34	34	—	34	34	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Episcopal Home for Children.....	76	76	—	76	76	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Jewish Foster Home.....	46	46	—	46	46	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
St. Ann's Infant Asylum.....	73	73	—	73	73	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
St. John's Orphanage.....	40	40	—	40	40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
St. Joseph's Home and School.....	69	69	—	69	69	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
St. Rose's Technical School.....	84	84	—	84	84	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
St. Vincent's Home and School.....	111	111	—	111	111	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Swartzell Methodist Home.....	58	58	—	58	58	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Nonsectarian:												
Juvenile Protective Association.....	17	10	7	—	—	—	17	10	7	—	—	—
German Orphan Asylum.....	41	41	—	41	41	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
National Home for Destitute Colored Women and Children.....	44	—	44	44	—	44	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hillcrest (Washington City Orphan Asylum).....	69	69	—	59	59	—	10	10	—	—	—	—
Washington Home for Foundlings.....	51	51	—	48	48	—	—	—	—	3	3	—
Fraternal:												
Masonic and Eastern Star Home.....	46	46	—	46	46	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

<sup>1</sup> According to the Bureau of the Census. See p. 66.<sup>2</sup> 56 in the Industrial Home School (for white children), 1 in the Receiving Home for Children.<sup>3</sup> 27 in the Industrial Home School for Colored Children, 1 in the Receiving Home for Children.

In addition to the Catholic Charities and the Juvenile Protective Association, reporting, respectively, 45 and 17 children under care in foster homes on the given date, the following two private institutions reported placed-out children: Hillcrest had 10 children in boarding homes and the Washington Home for Foundlings had 3 children in free homes. It must be remembered that the census information relates to December 31, 1933. It is possible that the facts have changed somewhat since that time. The census reports show that there is a large field for development of noninstitutional care for dependent children in Washington, in spite of the fact that the proportionate number of dependent children cared for in boarding homes is greater than in most large cities because of the policy of the Board of Public Welfare.

The data presented in the foregoing sections in regard to ages of children cared for under public and under private auspices, parental status, and so forth, do not suggest differences between the public and the private agencies that would explain the different practices with respect to type of care. This difference is brought out forcibly in the figures relating to colored children. Ninety-two percent of the dependent colored children were wards of the Board of Public Welfare. Of these 5 percent were in institutions, 77 percent were provided for in boarding homes, and 18 percent in other family homes. The very limited amount of care for colored children available under private auspices was provided by one institution and one agency. It is difficult to find suitable boarding home care, but it is undoubtedly easier to make such provision for white children than for colored children.

The different types of care given dependent white children are compared below with the types given dependent colored children:

<i>Type of care</i>	<i>Percent distribution</i>		
	<i>Total</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Colored</i>
<i>Total</i> .....	100	100	100
Institution.....	47	65	11
Boarding home.....	43	29	72
Free home.....	8	5	13
Work or wage home.....	2	1	4

The census data indicate that dependent children are given care according to the prevailing method used by the organization to which application is made, and that the type of care which is readily available and not the need of each child is often the determining factor. A hopeful beginning has been made in extending the service of institutions to include foster-home care, either through cooperation with a child-placing agency or through placement by the institution. The private institutions should develop this kind of service so that each child may be given care in an institution or in a boarding home or other family home according to his needs.

The Board of Public Welfare recognizes the need for institutional care of certain types of children by placing some of its wards in private institutions. Careful study of the needs of some of the children now in foster homes might show that training in a suitable institution would be better in some instances. It is a more commonly accepted principle that foster-home care would be desirable for some children now in institutions. In other words, the care of children who must be provided for away from their own homes must be flexible, and not dependent as largely as it seems to be in the District upon whether the children are wards of the public agency or of private institutions, and whether they are white or colored.

## APPENDIX TABLES

TABLE I.—*Type of care of dependent and neglected children under care of the Board of Public Welfare on the first day of each month, January–October 1937*

Type of care	Children under care									
	January		February		March		April		May	
	White	Colored	White	Colored	White	Colored	White	Colored	White	Colored
Total.....	710	770	700	779	701	786	718	796	717	800
Boarding home.....	389	420	391	424	394	427	394	426	394	427
Own or relative's home.....	107	122	102	129	108	128	119	137	118	133
Free.....	75	87	72	94	79	90	82	100	84	93
Board paid.....	32	35	30	35	29	38	37	37	34	40
Free home.....	34	64	33	67	33	65	32	67	32	68
Wage or "wage board" home.....	17	34	21	29	19	32	22	34	22	33
Trial adoption home.....	10	4	11	4	11	4	11	4	11	4
Institution under Board of Public Welfare.....	82	59	76	56	68	61	75	61	74	64
Private child-caring institution.....	51	28	51	32	48	31	46	29	49	33
Board paid by Board of Public Welfare.....	34	13	36	14	34	14	31	12	33	15
Board not paid by Board of Public Welfare.....	17	15	15	81	14	17	15	17	16	18
Hospital.....	5	6	2	5	6	3	7	5	3	8
"Absconders," or children whose whereabouts was not known.....	15	33	13	33	14	35	12	33	14	30

  

Type of care	Children under care									
	June		July		August		September		October	
	White	Colored	White	Colored	White	Colored	White	Colored	White	Colored
Total.....	733	809	737	808	742	810	752	823	761	833
Boarding home.....	402	429	400	436	402	430	408	440	401	446
Own or relative's home.....	116	127	113	130	105	122	116	136	116	124
Free.....	81	90	84	94	83	90	89	97	86	88
Board paid.....	35	37	29	36	22	32	27	39	30	36
Free home.....	33	70	34	71	34	70	29	69	32	70
Wage or "wage board" home.....	24	29	25	30	25	31	25	28	25	35
Trial adoption home.....	11	4	11	4	10	4	10	4	8	4
Institution under Board of Public Welfare.....	75	71	79	66	74	69	77	74	88	90
Private child-caring institution.....	52	32	55	30	68	46	59	28	66	26
Board paid by Board of Public Welfare.....	35	15	36	15	48	30	36	14	42	13
Board not paid by Board of Public Welfare.....	17	17	19	15	20	16	23	14	24	13
Hospital.....	4	9	1	4	1	4	6	11	4	7
"Absconders", or children whose whereabouts was not known.....	16	38	19	37	23	34	22	33	21	31



TABLE II.—*Type of care of delinquent children under care of the Board of Public Welfare on the first day of each month, January–October 1937*

Type of care	Children under care									
	January		February		March		April		May	
	White	Colored	White	Colored	White	Colored	White	Colored	White	Colored
Total .....	72	242	72	238	69	214	70	220	75	224
Boarding home .....		35	1	30	1	29	2	29	4	27
Own or relative's home .....	16	25	13	20	13	28	12	27	11	26
Free .....	16	23	13	20	13	28	12	27	11	25
Board paid .....		2								1
Free home .....		4		4		3		3		4
Wage or "wage board" home .....	1	4	1	4	1	4	1	3	1	4
Institution under Board of Public Welfare .....	45	128	47	134	42	106	46	112	48	115
Private child-caring institution .....	7	24	6	28	6	28	6	27	7	27
Board paid by Board of Public Welfare .....	1	15	1	16	1	16	1	16		16
Board not paid by Board of Public Welfare .....	6	9	5	12	5	12	5	11	7	11
Hospital .....		1	1		1	1		4		4
"Absconders," or children whose whereabouts was not known .....	3	21	3	18	5	15	3	15	4	17

  

Type of care	Children under care									
	June		July		August		September		October	
	White	Colored	White	Colored	White	Colored	White	Colored	White	Colored
Total .....	75	235	79	242	82	250	82	244	58	194
Boarding home .....	3	29	3	25	3	23	3	26	3	23
Own or relative's home .....	10	27	10	30	13	27	15	23	13	22
Free .....	10	26	10	29	13	26	15	22	12	21
Board paid .....		1		1		1		1	1	1
Free home .....		2		3	2	2	2	2	1	3
Wage or "wage board" home .....	2	6	2	6	2	5	2	5	1	3
Institution under Board of Public Welfare .....	46	126	50	130	47	142	49	135	29	93
Private child-caring institution .....	7	26	9	27	9	30	8	27	9	27
Board paid by Board of Public Welfare .....		15	1	17		19		17	1	16
Board not paid by Board of Public Welfare .....	7	11	8	10	9	11	8	10	8	11
Hospital .....	2	1								2
"Absconders," or children whose whereabouts was not known .....	5	18	5	21	6	21	3	26	2	21

TABLE III.—Type of care of white and colored dependent and neglected and delinquent children under care of the Board of Public Welfare on Nov. 1, 1936

Type of care	Children under care									
	Total		Dependent and neglected				Delinquent			
	Num- ber	Per- cent distrib- ution	Num- ber	Per- cent distrib- ution	White	Col- ored	Num- ber	Per- cent distrib- ution	White	Col- ored
Total.....	1,778	100.0	1,474	100.0	712	762	304	100.0	69	235
Foster-family home.....	1,197	67.3	1,135	77.0	526	609	62	20.4	5	57
Boarding home.....	832	46.8	799	54.2	389	410	33	10.9	-----	33
Relative's home.....	182	10.2	166	11.3	71	95	16	5.3	3	13
Free.....	114	6.4	100	6.8	38	62	14	4.6	3	11
Board paid.....	168	3.8	66	4.5	33	33	2	.7	-----	2
Free home.....	113	6.4	107	7.3	40	67	6	2.0	1	5
Wage home or "wage board" home.....	57	3.2	50	3.4	17	33	7	2.3	1	6
Trial adoption home.....	13	.7	13	.9	9	4	-----	-----	-----	-----
Parents' home.....	89	5.0	64	4.3	39	25	25	8.2	10	15
Institution under Board of Public Welfare.....	296	16.6	129	8.8	73	56	167	54.9	44	123
Industrial Home School for Colored Children.....	171	9.6	50	3.4	-----	50	121	39.8	-----	121
Industrial Home School (for white children).....	117	6.6	73	5.0	73	-----	44	14.5	44	-----
Receiving Home for Chil- dren.....	8	.4	6	.4	-----	6	2	.7	-----	2
Private child-caring institu- tion.....	276	4.3	62	4.2	47	15	14	4.6	-----	14
Board paid by Board of Public Welfare.....	67	3.8	54	3.7	39	15	13	4.3	-----	13
Board not paid by Board of Public Welfare.....	9	.5	8	.5	8	-----	1	.3	-----	1
Hospital.....	11	.6	11	.7	4	7	-----	-----	-----	-----
Other type.....	35	2.0	22	1.5	6	16	13	4.3	5	8
Civilian Conservation Corps.....	14	.8	11	.7	1	10	3	1.0	-----	3
Penal institution.....	12	.7	6	.4	1	5	6	2.0	1	5
United States Army.....	8	.4	4	.3	3	1	4	1.3	4	-----
Nurses' training school.....	1	.1	1	.1	1	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
"Absconders", or children whose whereabouts was not known.....	74	4.2	51	3.5	17	34	23	7.6	5	18

<sup>1</sup> Includes 50 children whose board was paid by means of grants of "aid to dependent children."<sup>2</sup> See table 5, p. 47.

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